

THE
HISTORY
OF
FLORENCE.
In EIGHT BOOKS.

Translated from the ITALIAN of
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Secretary to that REPUBLIC.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

GLASGOW:

Printed for ROBERT URIE, MDCCLXI.

THE HISTORY

OF

FLORIDA

IN EIGHT VOLUMES



VOLUME THE SECOND

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

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T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
F L O R E N C E.
B O O K V.

PROVINCES, in their change of government, for the most part run from order to disorder, and from disorder to order again. For constancy being by nature denied to sublunary things, as soon as they are mounted to a height of perfection, they must of force descend; and being fallen into disorder, and thereby come to their utmost declination, they must by the same necessity, since they can fall no farther, rise. Thus ever from good there is a descent to evil, and from evil an ascent to good; for virtue begets quiet, quiet idleness, idleness disorder, and disorder ruin: in like manner ruin produces order, order virtue, and virtue glory with good fortune. Whence the prudent have observed, that learning follows arms, and in all cities and countries, captains were before

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philosophers: for virtuous and well-governed arms having obtained victory, and victory produced quiet, the fortitude of active minds cannot be corrupted by any more justifiable idleness than the study of letters; nor can idleness, with any so fair and specious pretence, creep into a well instituted commonwealth. Of which Cato, at the time Diogenes and Carneades came ambassadors from Athens to the Senate of Rome, was perfectly sensible: for seeing the youth begin to follow them with great admiration, and perceiving the mischiefs that would, by that honest idleness, result to his country, he caused it to be enacted, that hereafter no philosophers should be received in Rome. And indeed, by these means are many countries brought to ruin, till men, grown weary of destroying one another, return, as has been said, to order; unless by some extraordinary force they are made utterly incapable of it. These occasions, first by the means of the ancient Tuscans, and afterwards of the Romans, made Italy sometimes happy, and sometimes miserable. And though, on the ruins of Rome, nothing has been founded adequate to its glory, which possibly under some gallant prince might have been effected, yet so much virtue is revived in some of the new cities, and new governments that arose out of the Roman ruins, that though one has not attained the command of the rest, yet they were so well united and linked together, that they were able to defend and free themselves from the incursions of barbarous people. Among which, the Florentines, though

not of any extent in dominion, were as large as any in power: for being seated in the midst of Italy, rich and ready to offend, they either successfully sustained the wars made against them, or brought victory to that party with whom they sided. From this virtue in these new principalities it proceeded, that though they never enjoyed any long time of quiet, yet the war was never very dangerous or terrible; for as it cannot be termed peace, where provinces are almost continually with arms assailing one another, so that cannot properly be called war, where the slaughter of men, sacking of cities, and ruin of governments does not attend. And assuredly the wars of these times were so weak and faint, that they were begun without fear, continued without danger, and ended without loss: so that that virtue, which long and lazy peace used to extinguish in other countries, became by the cowardize of their own arms extinct in Italy, as will plainly appear by what we shall now set down, from the year one thousand four hundred and thirty four to one thousand four hundred and ninety six: whereby it may be seen how, in the conclusion, the fences were again broken down for strangers to enter at, and Italy became subject to them. And though the actions of our princes abroad, and at home, may not perhaps, for their glory and greatness, deserve to be read with that admiration due to the ancients, yet possibly, for some other quality, they may merit to be considered with no less wonder; seeing so many brave and noble people, by a few,

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and those ill disciplined, soldiers kept in awe. And though, in the description of things, in these decayed and corrupt times, you may find no relation of any valour in soldiers, conduct in generals, or love of their country in citizens; yet you may discover with what cunning, craft and policy, princes, soldiers, and heads of commonwealths, to maintain a reputation they had never deserved, managed their affairs, which possibly may be of less advantage to human society than the other; for as those stir up noble minds to follow their example, these will incense us against them, and provoke us to fly and eschew them.

ITALY was, by those which governed it, reduced to such terms, that whenever upon the reconciliation of any princes or states a peace was concluded, it was presently again, by those that had arms in their hands, disturbed; so that no glory was gained by war, nor no quiet by peace. Wherefore, no sooner was the peace concluded in fourteen hundred and thirty three, between the duke of Milan and the League, but the soldiers, to keep themselves in exercise, turned their arms upon the church.

There were at this time in Italy two sorts of soldiers; those trained up under Braccio, and those under Sforza. The last were commanded by the earl Francis, son of Sforza; and the first had Nicolas Piccinino, and Nicolas Fortebrace for their leaders. And to these two bodies almost all the rest of the soldiers of Italy united themselves. Of

these two, Sforza's division had the greatest reputation, both because of their earl's valour, and of the promise made him by the duke of Milan, to give him Bianca his natural daughter in marriage, the hopes of which alliance added much to his esteem.

After the peace of Lombardy, those two armies, upon different occasions, assaulted Pope Eugenius: Fortibrace moved to it out of the ancient grudge born by Braccio to the church; and Sforza, by his own ambition; so that whilst Nicolas assailed Rome, the earl made himself lord of La Marca. Whereupon, the Romans, to avoid the war, drove Eugenius out of Rome, who, with danger and difficulty, escaped to Florence: where, considering the peril he was in, seeing himself abandoned by those princes, who before, so desirous of peace, would not for his sake renew the war, agrees with the earl, and grants him the signory of La Marca; though the earl, to the injury of having seized on it, had added reproaches, subscribing his letters to his agents, for setting out the land, in Latin words, according to the Italian custom, *Ex Girifalco nostro Firmiano, invito Petro et Paulo*. Nor was he content with the grant of the land, but would be made Gonfaloniere of the church. All which was consented to; so much more fearful was Eugenius of a hazardous war than of a dishonourable peace!

The earl, thus become the pope's friend, prosecuted Nicolas Fortibrace, and betwixt them, in the territories of the church, for several months

happened sundry accidents, more to the damage of the pope and his subjects, than of those that made the war. At last, by the mediation of the duke of Milan, an agreement, by way of truce, was made between them, and both remained princes in the territories of the church. This war, thus quenched at Rome, was kindled afresh in Romania by Battista de Canneto. He murdered first in Bologna some of the family of the Grifoni; then drove the pope's governor, and other his enemies, out of the city: and, to hold that state by force, craved aid of Philip; whilst, the pope, to revenge the injury, demanded assistance of the Venetians and Florentines. Each party had the desired aid given them, so that on a sudden two great armies infested Romania. Nicolas Piccinino was general for the duke, and the Venetian and Florentine forces were led by Guatamelata, and Nicolas Tolentino. Near Imola they came to a battle, wherein the Venetians and Florentines were overthrown, and Nicolas Tolentino sent prisoner to the duke; where, either by treachery, or oppressed with grief for his misfortunes, he soon after died.

The duke, after this victory, either because he was weakened by the former wars or imagining the allies after such an overthrow would be quiet, pursued his fortune no farther, but gave the pope and his confederates time to unite themselves: who chose earl Francis for their captain, and made an attempt to drive Fortibrace out of the church's territories, thereby, to put an end to that war they in the

pope's favour begun. The Romans, seeing now the pope grown powerful, sought his friendship, and received a governor from him. Nicolas Fortibrace, among other towns, was in possession of Triboli, Montefiasconi, the city of Castello, and Ascesi. Into this last, Nicolas, not being able to keep the field, was fled, where the earl besieged him; and the siege continuing somewhat long, for Nicolas manfully defended himself, the duke thought it necessary, either to hinder the league from obtaining this victory, or to contrive matters so, that, after it, he might be in condition to defend himself; therefore, to make the earl raise his siege, he commands Nicolas Piccinino to march by the way of Romania into Tuscany. Whereupon the confederates, judging it of greater concern to defend Tuscany than take Ascesi, commanded the earl to stop Nicolas's passage, who was already advanced with his army to Furli: the earl, upon the receipt of his orders, moves with his army, and comes to Cesena, leaving the care of the war in La Marca, and of his own estates, to his brother Lione. Whilst Piccinino thus sought a passage, and the earl to obstruct it, Nicolas Fortibrace falls upon Lione, and to his great renown takes him, plunders his carriages, and pursuing his victory, surprizes in an instant many towns of Romania. This misfortune much afflicted the earl, who fearing to lose his own estates, leaves part of his army to confront Piccinino, and with the remainder marches directly towards Fortibrace, fights and overcomes him. In

this battle Fortibrace was sorely wounded and taken prisoner, and soon after, of his wounds, died.

By this victory the pope was restored to all the lands taken from him by Nicolas Fortibrace, and the duke of Milan reduced to terms of demanding peace; which, by the mediation of Nicolas d'Este, marquis of Ferrara, was concluded, and by it, all the towns, which the duke possessed in Romania, restored to the church, and the duke's army withdrawn into Lombardy; so that Battista Canneto, as generally happens to all those who are supported in a dominion by the power or valour of others, so soon as the duke's forces were retreated out of Romania, his own strength or courage being insufficient to defend himself, was forced to flee from Bologna, and Antonio Bentivoglio, head of the contrary party, entered that city. All these things happened during the time of Cosmo's banishment.

After whose return, those who had recalled him, and divers other citizens before injured, consulted without any respect or reserve, how to secure themselves in the government; for the senate, which in the months of November and December succeeded in the magistracy, not satisfied with what their predecessors had done in favour of their party, prolonged and changed the confinements of many, and confined many others anew. Nor was the fullness of the factions so prejudicial to the citizens, as their riches, kindred, and private friendships: so that had this prescription been accompanied with blood, it might have been compared to those of Oc-

tavius, or Sylla. Yet was it in some measure stained with blood; for Bernardo Guadagni was beheaded, and four citizens more; among whom were Zanobi Belfratelli, and Cosmo Barbadori, who, having passed their confines, were taken at Venice; and the Venetians valuing more Cosmo's friendship than their own honour, had sent them home prisoners, where they were basely put to death; which increased the reputation of Cosmo's party, and struck terror into their enemies, considering that so potent a commonwealth should sell their liberty to the Florentines, which yet was thought to be done, not so much out of kindness to Cosmo, as to inflame the spirits of the factions, and make the division of the city, by means of the blood thus shed, more implacable and destructive; for the Venetians foresaw there could be no greater obstacle of their greatness, than the union of our city.

The city thus cleared of enemies, and all that were but suspected by the state, they applied themselves to shew their kindness to a new sort of people, the better to confirm their party; restoring the family of the Alberti, and all other the rebels to their country. All the grandees, except a very few, were brought into the orders of the people, and the possessions of the later rebels sold amongst them at small prizes. Next, they strengthened themselves with new ordinances, and made new imbursements, taking out their enemies names, and filling the purses with their friends. And warned by the ruin of their enemies, they thought it not enough to

have the purses thus replenished with choice men; but to establish their government the firmer, they consulted how to have the magistrates, appointed for life and death, elected out of the chiefs of their party; and to that end required, that those, appointed to make the impositions, should, together with the old senate, have authority to create the new. They gave to the eight of the guard power of life and death; and enacted, that those confined, though their time were expired, should not return, unless thirty four of the senate and college, which consisted but of thirty seven, should consent to their restitution. They also prohibited all writing to, or receiving letters from, any in exile: and every word, sign, or action, at which those in rule were pleased to take offence, were severely punished; and if there were any new suspicion started in Florence, which came not within the former bounds, it was by new mulcts or fines, by them imposed, punished; and thus having driven out or impoverished all the adverse party, they secured themselves in the government. And that they might not want assistance from abroad, but prevent those who by foreign force might design to offend them, they made defensive leagues with the pope, Venetians, and the duke of Milan.

Things thus settled in Florence, Joan queen of Naples dies, and by her last will and testament makes Rinier of Anjou heir of that kingdom. Alphonso king of Aragon was at the same time in Sicily, who, confiding in the friendship of several

Neapolitan barons, makes preparation to possess himself of that kingdom: but the Neapolitans, and many of the barons, favoured Rinier. The pope, on the other side, was unwilling to admit either Rinier, or Alphonso, but would have it governed by his lieutenant: yet Alphonso invades the kingdom, and is by the duke of Sessa received, and entertains several of the princes in his pay, with design being once entered Capua, which the prince in Alphonso's name possessed, to force the Neapolitans to a compliance; sending his fleet to attack Gaieta which held for the Neapolitans. Whereupon they of Naples craved aid of Duke Philip, who persuades the Genoese to assist them; and they not only to satisfy the duke their prince, but to secure the merchandizes they had in Naples and Gaieta, armed out a powerful fleet. Which Alphonso, having intelligence of, strengthens his, and goes in person to encounter the Genoese, whom engaging near the island Pontio, he received a total discomfiture, being himself with many other princes taken, and by the Genoese sent prisoners to Philip.

This victory terrified all those princes of Italy, who stood in fear of Philip's greatness, believing he had now an opportunity to make himself lord of all; but he, so different and various are men in their judgments, took a course quite contrary. Alphonso was a prudent man, and as soon as he came to discourse with Philip, he demonstrated to him, "How much he deceived himself in favouring Rinier against him; for if Rinier came once

“ to be king of Naples, he would with all his
 “ power endeavour to reduce Milan under the com-
 “ mand of France, that he might have easier as-
 “ sistance thence, and not have the way still to
 “ force open for his relief when he stood in ne-
 “ cessity. Nor could he otherwise secure himself,
 “ but by the ruin of that dukedom, and making
 “ of it French, whilst the quite contrary must fol-
 “ low, were he king of Naples; for having no e-
 “ nemy but the French to fear, he should be con-
 “ strained to love, honour, and obey him who had
 “ the only power to open a way to his enemies, so
 “ that the title of the kingdom would indeed reside
 “ in Alphonso, but the authority and power in
 “ Philip. Wherefore it much more concerned him
 “ than himself, to consider the benefit of the one
 “ and prejudice of the other, unless he were more
 “ intent to please his fancy than secure his state:
 “ for on one side he would be a prince, and free;
 “ on the other, placed between two powerful
 “ princes, he must either lose his state, live in con-
 “ tinual jealousy, or obey them as their servant.”

These words made such impression in the duke's
 mind, that changing purposes, he releases Alphonso,
 returning him honourably to Genoa; who thence
 transports himself to Gaieta, which, upon the first
 news of his delivery, had been surprized by some
 lords of his party. The Genoese seeing the duke
 had, without any notice taken of them, released
 Alphonso, assuming honour to himself at their ex-
 pence and hazard, for to him remained all the gra-

itude due for his enlargement, and to them only the regret for his defeat and captivity, were extremely incensed against him.

In the city of Genoa, whilst it was at liberty, they were wont by free votes to create a head whom they called Doge, not as absolute prince to determine matters of himself, but as president of a council, or speaker of a parliament, to propound matters whereof the magistrates and councils should consult. This city has many noble families so powerful, that with difficulty they submit to the commands of the magistrates; and amongst the rest the Fregosi and Adorni claim one of the chiefest ranks. From these arise the divisions of that city, and the corruption of civil orders; for many times not only fighting among themselves by taking up arms against the government, it happens that one party is oppressed, and the other rules; and often those, who are deprived of their dignity, have recourse to foreign assistance; submitting that dominion, which they cannot enjoy themselves, to the jurisdiction of strangers. Whence it frequently followed, that those, who reigned in Lombardy, commanded Genoa; as now at the taking of king Alphonso happened.

Among the chief of the Genoese that occasioned the submission of that city to Philip, was Francis Spinola, of whom, as it often happens to those that betray their country into servitude, the duke not long after grew jealous: whereat discontent, he had made choice of a kind of voluntary exile at Gaeta: where residing when the sea-fight happen-

ed with Alphonso, and behaving himself valiantly in that encounter, he thought he had afresh merited so much of the duke, that he might at least live securely at Genoa. But finding the duke still continued his jealousies, for he could not believe, that a man, who loved not the liberty of his country, could love him, he determined once more to try his fortune, and at one push restore liberty to his country, and fame and security to himself; for he saw there was no other way to gain a good opinion with his fellow citizens, than to make the hand that gave the wound to heal it. Perceiving, at the same time, the universal indignation conceived against the duke, for discharging king Alphonso, he thought it now a fit opportunity to put his design in execution, and communicates this his determination to several, whom he knew to be of the same opinion, persuading and encouraging them to join with him in it.

It was on the solemn feast of St. John Baptist, when Arifmino, a new governor sent from the duke, entered the city, accompanied by Opicino the old governor, and many Genoese. Francis Spinola now thought fit no longer to delay the attempt, but sallying out of his house with those that were privy to his determination, and coming into the public market-place, against which his palace stood, openly proclaimed the name of Liberty. It was miraculous to see with what alacrity and readiness the people ran to that very name; so that none, that either for their own benefit, or any other advantage,

loved the duke, had time either to take arms, or scarce to consult which way to fly. Arifmino, and some Genoese with him, fled into the castle, which was kept for the duke. Opicino presuming, if he could recover the palace, where he had two thousand soldiers under his command, he might either save himself, or encourage his friends to defend him, fled thitherwards; but before he could reach the Piazza was slain, and his body, torn in several pieces, dragged about the whole city. The Genoese having thus reduced the city under their own free magistrates, within few days after took the castle, and all the other strong places, garrisoned by Philip; utterly casting off the yoke of Milan.

This success changed the face of things; for, whereas before all the princes of Italy were terrified, fearing least the duke should grow too powerful, they had now some hopes he might be dealt withal, and stopt in his career; and notwithstanding the league lately made, the Venetians and Florentines made peace with the state of Genoa: whereupon Rinaldo de Albizi, and other principal men banished out of Florence, seeing these disturbances, and the course of things changed, entertained a hope they might persuade the duke to an open war with Florence; and coming to Milan, Rinaldo addresses himself to the duke in this manner. “ That
 “ we, once your enemies, should thus confident-
 “ ly come to crave your assistance, to restore us to
 “ our country, cannot be wondered at either by
 “ you, or any other that considers worldly affairs,

“ how strangely they proceed, and how variable
 “ they are ; for we can produce manifest and rea-
 “ sonable excuses of our past and present actions,
 “ both to you, and to our country. None can
 “ blame that man, that strives to defend his coun-
 “ try in whatsoever manner he defend it : nor did
 “ we ever design to injure you, but to guard our
 “ country from oppression ; for which we appeal
 “ to yourself, who can testify, that when the league
 “ was in a full course of victory, no sooner per-
 “ ceived we you inclined to a solid peace, but we
 “ were more earnest for it than yourself. So that
 “ we are not conscious of having done any thing
 “ should make us doubtful of obtaining favour
 “ from you : nor can our country complain, that
 “ we now encourage you to employ the same arms
 “ against it, which, with so much obstinacy we
 “ once defended it from ; for that country deserves
 “ to be beloved by all its citizens, that bears an
 “ equal love to all its citizens, and not that which,
 “ adoring some few, post-pones all the rest. Nor
 “ let any one in general terms condemn all occasi-
 “ ons of taking up arms against our country ; for
 “ though cities are bodies mixed, yet have they
 “ with simple bodies some resemblance : and as in
 “ these, many infirmities are bred, which without
 “ burnings and incisions cannot be cured, so in
 “ the other oftentimes happen those inconveniences
 “ and disorders, that a good and godly citizen,
 “ where fire and sword are necessary, would sin
 “ more in leaving the wounds uncured, than in

“ applying those sharp remedies. And what greater
“ malady can a republic groan under than servi-
“ tude? or what is more proper and necessary,
“ than that a fit remedy be applied to so violent a
“ temper? That war only is just which is necessary,
“ and those arms pious, where no other hope is
“ left. What necessity can be more pressing than
“ ours? or what piety greater, than to redeem our
“ country out of slavery? Doubtless then our cause
“ is just and merciful, which both you and we
“ ought first to consider. Neither is justice want-
“ ing on your part, since the Florentines have not
“ been ashamed, after a league so solemnly, and so
“ lately agreed on, to conclude a peace with the
“ rebelling Genoese. Therefore if for our sake
“ you will not, yet let your own cause move you,
“ and that the rather, because of the facility of the
“ enterprize. Nor let the examples past affright
“ you, whereby you have experienced the power
“ and obstinate defence made by that people, both
“ which might reasonably deter you, were that
“ city still as virtuous as before: but now alas! it
“ is quite the contrary; for what force is to be
“ feared from that city, which has so lately despoil-
“ ed itself of its riches and industry? what resolu-
“ tion can be expected in a people divided by so
“ many new and various enmities? Which disuni-
“ ons will be the cause, why the riches they have
“ yet left, cannot be employed in such manner as
“ formerly. For men willingly expose their
“ patrimonies, when they see them expended for

“ their own glory, and the honour and safety of
 “ their country, hoping to reap that advantage by
 “ peace, which war deprives them of; but the case
 “ is quite otherwise, when both in war and peace
 “ they behold themselves oppressed, forced by
 “ one to suffer the injury of their enemies, and
 “ by the other the insolency of their governors;
 “ because the avarice of their own citizens is more
 “ prejudicial to a people, than the spoil of their
 “ enemies; for they live still in hopes to see a con-
 “ clusion of this, but despair ever to behold an end
 “ of that. Besides, in former wars, you assailed
 “ a whole city, and are now to wage war only a-
 “ gainst the smallest part of it: you attempted then
 “ to take away the power from many citizens, now
 “ you assail only a few wicked usurpers; you then
 “ fought to deprive a city of its freedom, but now
 “ you endeavour to restore it to liberty. And it
 “ is not unreasonable to imagine, but such disparity
 “ of occasions must produce as different effects;
 “ nay, you may almost conclude of certain victory;
 “ which, how much it will fortify your state, you
 “ may easily judge, having made Tuscany your
 “ friend by the ties of such high and considerable
 “ obligations, which in all your enterprizes will
 “ stand you in more stead, than the whole force
 “ of Milan: and, whereas, at other times, this
 “ invasion would be branded as violent and ambi-
 “ tious, it will now gain the epithets of just and
 “ compassionate. Let not therefore this opportu-
 “ nity slip, but consider that as your former at-

“ tempts upon this city were attended with difficulty, damage and disgrace; this will be crowned with success, advantage and honour.”

There needed not many words to persuade the duke to a war with Florence; for he that is commanded by an hereditary hate, and blind ambition, is easily led to any thing; and the fresh injuries of the Genoese made him the more inclinable: but yet, the remembrance of his vast expences, the hazards he had been exposed to, and the losses he had so lately sustained, somewhat startled him.

The duke, as soon as he had intelligence of the revolt of Genoa, had sent Nicolas Piccinino, with all his men at arms, and as many foot as he could levy in the country, against that city, to reduce it by force, before the citizens had their minds settled, or had established a new government, confiding in the castle of Genoa, which still held out for him. And though Nicolas drove the Genoese up the mountains, and took from them the vale of Povevori, where they had fortified themselves, constraining them to retire within the walls of their city, yet he found so many stops and difficulties, and so much resolution in the Genoese to defend themselves, that he was content at last to retreat. Whereupon the duke, at the motion of the banished Florentines, gave order to assault the river on the eastern confines, and to prosecute the war towards the country of Pisa with all vigour imaginable, believing the attempt would, from time to time, chalk him out the way how to proceed farther.

Upon which Nicolas besieges Serazana, and takes it; and after having laid waste many places, the more to increase the Florentines jealousy, he comes to Lucca, giving out that he was marching into the kingdom of Naples to assist the king of Aragon.

Pope Eugenius, upon these new accidents, leaves Florence, and goes to Bologna, where he treats an accommodation between the duke and the league; declaring to the duke, that if he would not consent to the agreement, he should be necessitated to consign over earl Francis, at present his confederate, and under his pay, to assist the league. But though the pope took a great deal of pains in this affair, his labour proved all in vain; for the duke would consent to nothing, unless Genoa submitted, and the league would have that city free: whereupon in despair of peace, all sides prepared for war.

Nicolas Piccinino being come to Lucca, the Florentines, jealous of some new design, caused all their forces, under the command of Neri di Gino, to march into the country of Pisa, and prevailed with the pope, that earl Francis should join with him, and the whole army make head at Sancta Gonda. Piccinino, who lay at Lucca, desired free passage to the kingdom, which being denied him, he threatened to force it. The armies were equal in men and captains, and therefore both wary of tempting fortune; and besides, withheld by the cold season, for it was now December, lay many days without any action on either side. The first

that moved was Nicolas Piccinino, who being informed, that if he stormed Vico Pisano by night, he might easily take it, made the attempt; but not having the good fortune to carry it, he sackt all the country, pillaging and burning the borough of St. John alla Vena.

The success of which enterprize, though in effect to little purpose, encouraged Nicolas to proceed farther, especially seeing the earl and Neri yet stirred not: whereupon he assaults St. Maria in Castello, and Fietto, and carries them. Yet for all this the Florentine army lay still, not that the earl was afraid, but because the Florentine magistrates, out of respect to the pope who endeavoured for peace, had not yet decreed the war. But what the Florentines did in prudence, their enemies attributed to cowardize, and thence took courage to proceed to new actions: whereupon, concluding upon the taking of Barga, they presented themselves before it with all their forces. The besieging this town made the Florentines lay aside all respects, and resolve not only to relieve Barga, but to fall upon the territories of Lucca. Whereupon, the earl advanced towards Piccinino, and engaging him near Barga, overcame him, forcing him, in great disorder, to raise his siege.

Mean while the Venetians, judging the duke had broken the peace, sent John Francisco de Gonzaga, their general, to Chiaradadda, who, ravaging and spoiling the duke's country, forced him to recal Nicolas Piccinino out of Tuscany. Which revo-

cation, together with the defeat before given to Nicolas, put the Florentines in such heart, that they resolved to attack Lucca, with great hopes to become masters of it. Nor had they indeed any great reason to fear it, or were by any respect obliged to refrain it, since the duke, whose forces only awed them, was diverted by the Venetians; and the Lucchesi having received and quartered their enemies, and encouraged them to the assault of their towns, could not now complain of any wrong done them.

In April one thousand four hundred and thirty seven, the earl set forward with his army; but before the Florentines would make the assault upon others, they thought fit to recover their own, and retook Sancta Maria in Castello, and all the other places taken by Piccinino; and then entering their territories, they besieged Camajore, whose inhabitants, though faithful to their lords, yet fear of a present enemy prevailing over their fidelity to distant friends, they yielded: and with like reputation were Massa and Serazana surrendered. Which done, about the latter end of May the army drew towards Lucca, all the way as they went destroying the corn, burning the villages, cutting down the trees, rooting up the vineyards, driving away the cattle; and in a word, acting all the outrages and hostilities, the most enraged enemy would or could do. Whilst on the other side, the Lucchesi seeing themselves forsaken by the duke, and despairing to defend their country, had deserted it; and

with ramparts, trenches, and all other convenient fortifications, strengthened their city, not doubting but having men enough within, they might for some time defend it, as in former assaults made by the Florentines they had done. They only feared the mutable mind of the common people, who, perhaps, wearied with the siege, would be more concerned for their private danger, than for the liberty of their city, and so force them to some base and dishonourable composition. Wherefore, to heighten their resolutions, they assembled them in the market-place; where one of the gravest and wisest citizens spake in this manner.

“ You ought always to remember, that what is
“ done out of necessity deserves neither commendations nor blame; and therefore, if you should
“ complain that we have occasioned this war by
“ receiving the duke’s forces into our territories,
“ and permitting them to assault the Florentines,
“ you are much in the wrong. You know well
“ the ancient enmity born to this state by the Florentine people, which no injury of yours, nor
“ jealousy of theirs, but only your weakness, and
“ their ambition, hath occasioned; for the first
“ gives them hopes to oppress you, and the last encourages them to perform it. Nor can you well
“ imagine that any desert in you can quench, or
“ any injury to them inflame their desires of offending you. Wherefore, as they strive to rob
“ you of liberty, you must labour to defend it;
“ and at what either party shall do to those ends,

“ though all may be grieved, none can wonder :
“ for though it may afflict us to see our territories
“ invaded, our towns sackt, our houses burnt, our
“ country destroyed ; yet none can be such a fool
“ to admire at it, since, were it in our power, we
“ should do the like to them and worse : and,
“ whereas they have begun this war upon Picci-
“ nino’s coming hither, had he not come they
“ would have found some other pretence, and
“ perhaps the danger being deferred would have
“ proved greater. We ought not therefore to blame
“ his coming hither, but our own hard fortune,
“ and their ambitious nature : for we could not
“ refuse the entrance of the duke’s forces into our
“ dominions, nor when they were entered hinder
“ them from prosecuting the war. You know
“ that without some powerful alliance we cannot
“ be defended ; and what potentate more proper to
“ do it, both for force and fidelity, than the duke ?
“ he restored our liberty, it is reasonable he should
“ defend it : he hath been a constant persecutor of
“ all our ancient enemies ; if then, by not offend-
“ ing the Florentines we should have incurred his
“ anger, we had both lost our friend, and made
“ our enemy more powerful, and more apt to of-
“ fend us : so that it is much better to have this
“ war with the duke’s love, than peace with his
“ displeasure : and we have reason to hope he will
“ rescue us from those dangers, in which he hath
“ engaged us, provided we do not forsake him. You
“ know well with what rage the Florentines have

“ oft-times assaulted us, and with how much glory
“ we have defended ourselves; even then when we
“ had no other hope than in God, and time, and
“ both of them miraculously preserved us: and if
“ then we defended ourselves, why should we des-
“ pair of doing it now? all Italy had then left us
“ as a prey to them: now we have the duke on
“ our side, and may reasonably believe the Vene-
“ tians will be slow in offending us; for the great-
“ ness of Florence will not be consistent with their
“ interest. In former actions the Florentines
“ were more at freedom, and in more hopes of
“ assistance, and we in all points weaker; for then
“ a tyrant defended us, now we defend ourselves:
“ the glory accrued then to others, now it will be
“ our own; then united they assaulted us, now in
“ disunion; all Italy being filled with their exiles.
“ Finally, were none of these things so, necessity
“ should urge to a resolute defence. It is reason-
“ able to withstand every enemy, for they all pro-
“ secute their own glory with our ruin; but above
“ all we ought to dread the Florentines, whom our
“ obedience, tribute, and subjection will not con-
“ tent, but who aim at our persons and estates;
“ with our blood to satiate their cruelty, and with
“ our substance their avarice: so that all forts and
“ degrees among us ought to have them in detest-
“ ation. Be not therefore dismayed to see your
“ fields spoiled, your towns burnt, your castles
“ garrisoned or demolished; for if we save our city,
“ they will easily again be recovered, but losing it,

“ all will with it be utterly lost: preserving our
 “ liberty, hardly can the enemy preserve our
 “ towns; but losing our freedom, in vain possess
 “ we any thing else. Stand therefore to your
 “ arms, and when you fight remember, that the
 “ reward of victory will not only be the safety of
 “ your country, but of your houses, your wives,
 “ and your children.

These last words so animated the whole multitude, that, with an universal cry, they all promised rather to die, than yield, or consent to any terms infringing their liberty; and prepared all things necessary for the defence of the city.

Mean while the Florentine army lay not idle; and after inexpressible damage done to the country, took Monte Carlo on articles, and from thence went and encamped before Uzzano, that the Lucchesi, begirt on every side, might become hopeless of any relief, and constrained by famine, yield. The Lucchesi, as it was but reasonable, seeing themselves thus streightened, had recourse to the duke for aid, by all kind and obliging means recommending themselves to his favour; sometimes in their speeches setting forth their own merits; sometimes the oppressions of the Florentines; and how much courage it would add to his friends, if he defended them; and how dishearten them, if he left them defenceless; and if they should lose their lives and liberties, he, with his friends, would lose his honour and credit with all those, who, for his sake, should hereafter run themselves into any danger:

adding tears to their speeches, to the end, that if the obligations he had to them could not move him, compassion might. Infomuch, that the duke having his old grudge against the Florentines, now joined with his fresh obligation to the Lucchesi, and above all, desirous the Florentine power should not be increased by such an addition, determined to send a great army into Tuscany, or so fiercely assail the Venetians, that the Florentines should be glad to raise their siege to come and assist them.

This resolution taken, intelligence was soon brought to Florence, that the duke was sending forces into Tuscany, so that their hopes of success began to flag: however, that the duke might be diverted in Lombardy, they solicited the Venetians to set upon him with all their forces. But they were already disheartened by the marquis of Mantua's forsaking them, and taking the duke's pay: whereby, being in a manner disarmed, they replied, that they were so far from being able to appear in a better posture, that they should not be capable to keep the field, if earl Francis were not sent to be their general, with condition, that he should oblige himself in person to pass the Po; for they would not stand to the old articles, by which he was not obliged to pass it; alleging, that without a general they could not make war, and on none but the earl could they rely, nor on him neither, unless he were obliged to make war in all places.

The Florentines were of opinion the war should be hotly pursued in Lombardy; and on the other

side, without the earl, they despaired of ever carrying Lucca : and very sensible were they, that this demand of the Venetians was not made so much out of any necessity that they were in of the earl's presence, as to hinder them of this victory : on the other side, the earl was to go into Lombardy whenever the league appointed him, but he would not change his agreement, unwilling to deprive himself of the hopes of that alliance promised him by the duke.

Thus were the Florentines distracted between two diverse passions, the desire of having Lucca, and the fear of a war with the duke. But, as for the most part it happens, fear prevailed, and they were content that the earl, having taken Uzzano, should go into Lombardy. There remained yet another difficulty, which not being in the Florentine power to compose, perplexed them, and created more doubts than the former : for the earl would not pass the Po ; and the Venetians, if he did not, would not entertain him. So there being no way of accommodation to be found, but by the one yielding to the other, the Florentines persuaded the earl, that he should write a letter to their senate, obliging himself to pass that river ; alleging, that a private promise could not make a breach of public faith, and that he might afterwards make war without passing it ; only this advantage would accrue to them, that the Venetians, having begun the war, would be forced to prosecute it, and thereby give a diversion to those forces they so much fear-

ed: and to the Venetians on the other side, they affirmed, that this private letter was enough to oblige him, and therefore they ought to content themselves with it; for if they could contrive how the earl might still preserve his respects to his father-in-law, it were convenient to do it, and would be no way either for his or their advantage, without manifest necessity, to discover it. Thus was the earl's passage into Lombardy contrived; who having taken Uzzano, and raised some bulwarks about Lucca, to streighten the besieged, leaving the charge of the war to his lieutenants, he passed the Alps, and comes to Reggio; where, the Venetians grown jealous of his proceedings, to make trial of his intentions, dispatched away a messenger to him with orders to pass the Po, and join the rest of their forces: which the earl utterly denying to do, there happened many reproachful words between him and Andrea Mauroceno, who was sent from the Venetians; the one telling the other, that he had a great deal of pride, but little faith: and several protests being made, by the one that he was not obliged to the service, and by the other, that there should be no money paid; the earl returned into Tuscany, and Mauroceno to Venice. The earl was by the Florentines quartered in the country of Pifa, and they were still in hopes to induce him to renew the war against Lucca, which they found he had no great inclination to; for the duke understanding that out of respect to him he had refused

to pass the Po, thought he might by his mediation save Lucca likewise, and therefore desired him to consent to make peace between the Lucchesi and the Florentines, and, if he would, include him also; putting him in hopes he should, when he pleased, be married to his daughter. This alliance tickled the earl, being in hopes by means of it, the duke having no male issue, to make himself one day lord of Milan: wherefore he delayed the Florentine proceedings, declaring he would not stir, till the Venetians had made full payment of his conduct money: nor was their pay sufficient; for designing to live securely in his own estates, he thought it convenient to have other supports than the Florentines; and if he were deserted by the Venetians, it was time to look about him; cunningly threatening and intimating an agreement with the duke.

These deceits and cavils vexed the Florentines at heart; for they not only beheld Lucca lost to them, but were in fear of their own estates, whenever the duke and earl should join together: and to induce the Venetians to make payment of the money promised, Cosmo de Medici went to Venice, believing by his reputation he might incline them to it. The matter was at large disputed in their senate: the state of Italy laid down before them; what force the duke was of, and where the strength and reputation of arms now lay; and that if the duke and earl did join, the Venetians would be driven to sea, and the Florentines in danger of their liberty. To which the Venetians replied, that they knew their

own strength, and that of Italy; affirming, it was not their custom to pay soldiers that served others; wherefore the Florentines should take care to pay Sforza, since he had done them service; but certainly it were fitter, if they would possess their city in security, to abase the pride of the earl, than pay him, for the ambition of that man was boundless, and if now he were paid without doing service, he would ere long demand something more dishonest and dangerous. Therefore in their opinion, they ought in time to find some way to bridle his insolency, and not suffer him to become incorrigible. But if they either for fear, or any other design, thought fit to preserve his friendship, they might pay him if they pleased.

Thus Cosmo, without effecting any thing, was fain to return. Yet the Florentines used their endeavours with the earl, that he might not withdraw himself from the league; and he was indeed unwilling to desert them, but his earnest desire to conclude his marriage kept the balance so even, that the scales upon every accident, as one soon after happened, were ready to turn.

The earl had left the charge of his towns in La Marca, to one Furlano a principal leader of his; who, being long solicited by the duke, discharged himself of the earl's service, and entered into the duke's pay; which made the earl, out of fear to himself, lay aside all respects, and come to an agreement with the duke; and one of the articles was, that he should no farther concern himself in

the affairs of Romania and Tuscany. Upon this conclusion, the earl instantly persuaded the Florentines to make peace with Lucca, and indeed in a manner forced them to it; so that seeing no other remedy, in April one thousand four hundred and thirty, articles were concluded on; by which the Lucchesi still remained free, and the Florentines had Monte Carlo, and several other of their castles left in their possession. Then with letters of resentment they filled all Italy, declaring, that since God and men had conspired that Lucca should not fall under their subjection, they had now made peace with it: and seldom have any grieved more for the loss of their own, than the Florentines did that they could not violently seize the possessions of other men.

In these times, though the Florentines had so many irons in the fire, they forgot not to have a care of their neighbours, and to adorn their city. Nicolas Fortibrace, who had married a daughter of earl Poppi, was, as hath been said before, dead. That earl had, at Nicolas's death, the borough of St. Sepulchro, with the castle, in his hands; which he held during his son-in-law's life, as governor under him: after whose death, he pretended still to keep possession of them for his daughter's dower, refusing to surrender them to the pope, who, as of right belonging to the church, had demanded them: whereupon he sent the patriarch with forces to recover them. The earl, doubting himself unable to endure the shock, offers the town to the

Florentines, who refused it; but at the pope's return to Florence, meditated an accommodation between him and the earl, and finding some difficulty in agreeing them, the patriarch assaulted Casentino, and took Prato, Vecchio and Romenia; and in like manner offered them to the Florentines, who refused the acceptance of them, unless the pope would first consent they might restore them to the earl; to which the pope, after tedious disputes agreed; but would first have the Florentines promise, that the earl should surrender the borough.

The pope's affair thus settled, the Florentines thought convenient, their cathedral church called St. Reparata, which had a long time been building, being now brought to such perfection that divine service might there be celebrated, to request his holiness in person to consecrate it, who readily consented; and for the greater magnificence of the city and church, and to do the pope more honour, a terrace was built from St. Maria Novella, where the pope resided, to the church that was to be consecrated, four yards wide, and two yards high, covered over with very rich cloth, on which only the pope and his court, with the magistrates, and those citizens appointed to attend him, walked; the rest of the commonalty and people stood either in the streets, in their houses, or in the church, to behold so glorious a spectacle. Having performed all the ceremonies usual in such consecrations, the pope, to give a greater testimony of his love to the city, honoured with knighthood Giulian Avan-

zati, then Gonfalonier of justice, and in all times accounted a noble and worthy citizen; and the senate, to appear no less kind than the pope, gave him the government of Pisa for a year.

In these times there was some difference between the Roman and Greek churches about divine service, and because in the last council held at Basil, much had been said about it by the western prelates, it was there determined, that all possible diligence should be used to induce the emperor and the Greek prelates to assemble in council, and there to make trial if they could reconcile the differences, and consent to the Roman church. And though this determination intrenched upon the majesty of the emperor, and much more grated on the proud spirits of his prelates, to yield to the pope of Rome; yet being oppressed by the Turks, and considering they were not able of themselves to defend themselves, that they might with more security demand and rely upon the western assistance, they resolved to submit; and so the emperor, patriarchs, and other Greek prelates and lords, in order to an assembly, according to the conclusion agreed on at the council of Basil, came to Venice, where terrified with the plague, they resolved in Florence to end their differences; and after several meetings of the Roman and Greek prelates, and many long and tedious disputes, the Greeks submitted, and came to accord with the church and pope of Rome.

The peace being concluded between Florence and Lucca, and between the duke and the earl, it was

thought an easy matter to pacify those arms which still infested Italy, especially Lombardy and Tuscany: for as for the war in Naples between Rinier of Anjou, and Alphonso of Aragon, it could not be expected to be put an end to without the ruin of one party: and though the pope was dissatisfied, having lost many of his towns, and that all men were sensible of the ambition both of the duke and the Venetians; yet, most thought the pope out of necessity, and the others out of weariness, would lay down their arms. But things fell out quite contrary; for neither the duke nor the Venetians would be quiet; whence it happened that new forces were raised, and Lombardy and Tuscany again made seats of war. The duke's haughty mind could not endure the Venetians should be masters of Bergamo and Brescia, especially seeing them in a warlike posture, and daily molesting and disquieting his country. He therefore supposed, that if they were deserted by the pope, the Florentines and the earl, he could not only stop their career, but recover his own towns. To compass which he designed to take Romania from the church, conjecturing, if he were lord of that province, the pope could no way hurt him, and the Florentines seeing the fire at their own doors, either would not stir for fear, or if they did, must very disadvantageously assault him. The duke also very well knew, how angry the Florentines were at the Venetians about the business of Lucca, and therefore thought they would not be over-eager to engage in their quarrel.

As for earl Francis, he doubted not but the late agreement, and the hopes of his alliance, would keep him steady; and that he might eschew all manner of offence, and give the less alarm, being, by his late articles with the earl, bound not to invade Romania, he privately treated with Nicolas Piccinino, that he, as if led by his proper ambition, should take that enterprize in hand.

Nicolas, at the time of making the agreement between the duke and earl, was in Romania, and appeared highly displeased at the duke's entertaining a friendship with his perpetual enemy, and thereupon with his army withdrew to Camurata, a place between Furli and Ravenna; where he encamped, as if it had been for a long time, and with design to stay there till some new expedition presented. And the fame of his anger and discontent being spread abroad every where, Nicolas sent to acquaint the pope, how well he had deserved of the duke, and how ingratfully he had been dealt withal by him; and withal let him know that Philip gave out, that having now all the arms of Italy, under the two principal captains, at his command, he would seize the whole province: but yet, if his holiness pleased, of those two captains the duke persuaded himself to be at his dispose, one should become his enemy, and the other be useless to him; for if he would provide money, and pay his soldiers, he would fall upon those estates the earl had robbed the church of, and giving him his hands full in his own defence, hinder him from

pressing forward the duke's ambition. The pope believed this feigned tale, it appearing reasonable to him, and sends Nicolas five thousand ducats, with mountains of promises, offering estates to him and his sons. And though the pope was often advertised of the deceit, yet he would needs believe it a reality, and would hear nothing to the contrary.

Ostasio da Polenta was now governor of Ravenna, for the church. Nicolas thinking it fit no longer to delay the execution of his designs, his son Francis having to the pope's great ignominy already sacked Spoleto, resolved to besiege Ravenna; either because he thought it might easily be taken, or having some private intelligence with Ostasio; however it were, in a very few days lying before it, it was surrendered on articles; and soon after Bologna, Imola, and Furli, followed the same fortune. But what was most to be admired, of all the castles held for the pope in that territory not one submitted to Nicolas. Nor did he think these injurious actions wrong enough to the pope, but with reproachful words he derided him; writing to him, that he had deservedly lost his towns, since he had not been ashamed to make a breach of friendship between him and his old friend the duke, by having filled all Italy with letters, signifying, that he had deserted the duke and joined with him.

Nicolas, thus possessed of Romania, leaves it in charge to Francis his son, and with the choice of his army marches into Lombardy, and joining with the duke's forces, enters the territory of

Brescia, which in a short time he becomes master of, and besieges the city. The duke, who was desirous the Venetians should be left as a prey to him, excuses himself to the pope, the Florentines, and the earl, declaring, that what Nicolas had done in Romania, if it were a breach of articles, was also contrary to his orders, and by private messengers insinuated into them, that he would give evident demonstrations of his dislike of it, by punishing his disobedience when time and opportunity served. The Florentines and earl gave no credit to him, believing, as indeed the truth was, that the attempt was made only to keep them at bay, whilst he tamed the Venetians, who, proud and haughty, believing themselves able to oppose the duke's forces, vouchsafed not to ask any ones assistance, but under Gattamelata their general maintained the war.

Earl Francis, with the consent and favour of the Florentines, was desirous to have gone to the assistance of king Renate, if these accidents in Lombardy and Romania had not withheld him; and the Florentines were willing to have encouraged him to it, by reason of the ancient amity between their city and the house of France; but the duke favoured Alphonso, since the friendship contracted in the time he was his prisoner: however, both one and the other forbore, whilst the war was at their own doors, undertaking distant enterprizes. And now the Florentines seeing Romania surprized, and the Venetians assaulted, from others ruin, fearing their

own, desired the earl to come into Tuscany, where they would consult, what was to be done to oppose the duke's forces, which were now greater than ever; affirming that if suddenly his insolencies were not suppressed, all that held any states in Italy might justly fear to rue it. The earl was sensible that the apprehensions of the Florentines were reasonable; yet his earnest desire to perfect an alliance with the duke kept him in suspense: and the duke, who knew how much that desire swayed him, fed him still with hopes; and to restrain him from engaging against him, let him know that his daughter was now marriagable, and carrying on matters so far, that preparations were made for the wedding, which yet by some cavils and delays was again obstructed. However, to keep fair, and gain the firmer credit with the earl, the duke added works to his words, sending him thirty thousand florins, which, by the marriage contract, he was to pay him. Still the war grew hotter in Lombardy, and the Venetians daily lost some town or other; and all the vessels of war that they had sent up the river, were by the duke's forces taken; the whole territory of Verona and Brescia by them possessed, and those two cities so streightly besieged, that it was generally thought they could not long hold out.

The marquis of Mantua, who had many years been general of the forces of that republic, even beyond all belief, had forsaken them, and joined with the duke; so that what their pride would not let them do in the beginning of the war, their fear

made them submit to in the progress of it. For now, seeing there was no remedy, but engaging the Florentines and the earl, they sought their friendship, though it were with shame and doubt of success; for they were jealous lest the Florentines should return them the same answer they had received from them in the business of Lucca, and concerns of the earl: but they found them readier than they hoped for, or than their deportment had deserved; for hatred to an ancient and inveterate enemy prevailed in the Florentines, above their resentments and anger conceived against old and tried friends: and having long since foreseen the necessities into which the Venetians would fall, they had endeavoured to convince the earl that their ruin would likewise be his; and that he deceived himself, to believe the duke would esteem him less in his good than evil fortune; for the reason of the duke's promising him his daughter, being only the fear he stood in of him, those things necessity makes men promise, it must likewise make them perform; and therefore it ought to be his design still, to keep the duke in the same necessity, which without the Venetians greatness could not be done. Wherefore he ought to consider, that if the Venetians were driven from the firm land, he would not only want those conveniencies he might receive from themselves, but even those, which all others, for fear of them, might otherwise contribute; and if he well considered the other states of Italy, he would find some of them poor, and others his enemies. Nor

were the Florentines alone, as himself had often said, sufficient to support him; so that upon all accounts, it was his main concern to preserve the Venetians power on the continent. These persuasions added to the hate newly conceived by the earl against the duke, for thinking himself mocked in the alliance, made him consent to an agreement; yet would he not be obliged to pass the river Po.

These articles were concluded in February one thousand four hundred and thirty eight, by which the Venetians agreed to pay two thirds, and the Florentines one third of the charge; and both bound themselves to the defence of the earl's territories in La Marca, at their proper costs. Neither was the league yet content with these forces, but joined to themselves the lord of Faenza, the sons of Signior Pandolfo de Malatesta de Rimini, and Piero Giampagolo Orsino. But though with large promises they tempted the marquis of Mantua, yet they could by no means withdraw him from the duke's pay and friendship: and the lords of Faenza, after the league had concluded and settled their establishment, finding a better bargain, revolted to the duke; which put the league out of hopes of so soon dispatching the affairs of Romania, as they once thought.

At this time, in great distress was Lombardy; for Brescia was so closely besieged by the duke's forces, that all men thought it would be forced through famine to surrender: nor was Verona in any better condition; and in the judgment of most

men, either of these cities being taken, all further preparations would be in vain, and all the expence, hitherto made, be lost. So that now there was no other remedy to be proposed, but the marching of earl Francis into Lombardy. In which there appeared three main difficulties: first, the disposing the earl to pass the Po, and prosecute the war every where: in the second place, the Florentines were extremely apprehensive of being left at the duke's discretion, if the earl were drawn off from their assistance; for the duke could easily retire into his strong holds, and with part of his army attend the earl's motions, and with the remainder, joining with their rebels, come into Tuscany; the fear of which extremely terrified the present government. The third was, which way the earl should march to join with the rest of the Venetian forces, which lay in the country of Padua.

Of these three difficulties, the second which concerned the Florentines was the most doubtful; yet they sensible of the necessity, and tired with the Venetians importunity, who incessantly demanded the earl's advancing, declaring that without him they must abandon all, submitted the fear and suspicion of their own safety to the necessities of their allies. So there now remained only the difficulty of the way, which was concluded must be secured by the Venetians; and because Neri di Gino Capponi had been successful in making the agreement with the earl, and persuading him to pass the Po, the senate thought fit to send him express to Venice,

to endear this favour to that senate, and to consult about the way, and security of the earl's passage. Neri takes his way to Cefena, and from thence by sea to Venice; nor was there ever any prince received with more respect and honour by that senate; for on his coming, and on what by his means they were to order and determine, they thought the honour and safety of their empire depended.

Neri, being admitted into the senate, addressed himself to the duke in this manner. “ Those
“ lords that sent me, most serene prince ! have ever
“ been of opinion, that the duke's greatness would
“ be the ruin of this state, and of our common-
“ wealth, and therefore the welfare of both states
“ depends on your greatness and ours. Had this
“ been believed by your lordships we should have
“ found ourselves in a better condition, and your
“ estates would have been secured from those dan-
“ gers which now threaten them. But because in
“ due time you gave no credit to us, we were
“ made incapable of applying quick remedies to
“ your disasters, and you of readily demanding
“ them : for you have not studied us either in your
“ adversity or prosperity, nor perhaps do you yet
“ know that it is our temper still to love those we
“ have once loved, and always to hate them against
“ whom we have once justly conceived a hatred.
“ Be yourselves the witnesses of the love we have
“ ever born this most noble senate, by the know-
“ ledge you have, how, to our own apparent dam-
“ age, we have often sent our forces into Lom-

“ bardy to your assistance and succour; and the
 “ whole world can testify the hate we bare Philip,
 “ and his whole family. Nor can such ancient
 “ love, and so settled a hatred, be easily cancelled.
 “ We were, and are certain, that in this war we
 “ might have stood neuters, to the duke’s infinite
 “ satisfaction, and no great hazard to ourselves;
 “ for though, by your ruin, he should become
 “ lord of all Lombardy, yet would the remaining
 “ force of Italy be sufficient to keep us from de-
 “ spair; for with power and dominion envy and
 “ enemies increase, which are usually attended
 “ with war and destruction. We are likewise very
 “ sensible how vast an expence might have been
 “ avoided by our declining this war; how many
 “ eminent dangers we might have escaped: for
 “ whereas Lombardy is now made the seat of it, by
 “ our assisting you it may be carried into Tuscany:
 “ yet our ancient affection to you has made us
 “ banish all those jealousies and suspicions, and we
 “ have resolved with the same power and affection
 “ to assist you, as we would defend ourselves, if
 “ we were assaulted. Wherefore, my lords! judg-
 “ ing it of absolute necessity, before all things, to
 “ relieve Verona and Brescia, and believing with-
 “ out the earl it could not be done, we sent first
 “ to persuade him to pass the Po, and make war
 “ in all places; for you know he was not obliged
 “ to pass that river; yet have I disposed him to it,
 “ prevailing with him by the same reasons that pre-
 “ vailed over us. And as he seems invincible in

“ arms, so he will not be overcome in courtesy,
“ but contends to be the superior in that genero-
“ sity and liberality he beholds in us towards you;
“ for he knows well to how many dangers Tuscany
“ is exposed by his drawing thence his forces: yet
“ seeing we have postponed our own safety to your
“ relief, he will not prefer any respects or interests
“ of his own before it. I come therefore to offer
“ you the earl, with seven thousand horse, and
“ two thousand foot, ready to go any where whi-
“ ther you shall command him, to find out your
“ enemies. I intreat you therefore, and it is also
“ both my lords and his request, that as the num-
“ bers of his men exceed what he is obliged to
“ serve with, so your liberality will extend to him
“ a proportionable recompence; that he may not
“ repent his coming into your service, nor we be
“ sorry that ever we encouraged him to it.

This speech of Neri's to the Venetian senate was listened to with as much attention as if it had proceeded from an oracle, and so much did his words move the auditory, that not having the patience, according to custom, to let the prince return him an answer, they all rose up, and lifting up their hands with tears of joy, many of them, in their eyes, returned thanks to the Florentines for so friendly an assistance, and to him, for having with such speed and celerity dispatched it; promising, that no process of time should ever blot the memory of it out of theirs, or the hearts of their posterity; but that their country should be in common to the

Florentines and them. These kindnesſes and congratulations ended, they began to conſult what way the earl had beſt march, that bridges might be erected, paſſages levelled, and other ſecurities provided. Four ways were propoſed; one from Ravenna along the ſea ſide; but this being narrow, and ſtreightned by the fens and marſhes, was not approved; the next was the direct way; but that was impeached by a tower called Uccellino, kept for the duke, which muſt of neceſſity be won before paſſage could be had, and that was hard to do in ſo ſhort a time; for the leaſt delay might rob them of an opportunity of relieving their cities, which above any thing required haſte and diligence: the third was by the woods of Lugo; but becauſe the Po had overſwelled its banks, that paſſage was made not only difficult but impoſſible. There remained only the fourth, which was by the campaign of Bologna, and ſo paſſing at Ponte Puledrano, at Cento and at Pieve, march between Finale and Bondeno to Ferrara, from whence, by land and water, they might eaſily transport themſelves into the country of Padua, and join with the Venetian forces.

Though there was in this way many difficulties, and poſſibly ſome paſſes might be guarded by the enemies forces, yet, as leſs dangerous than any of the reſt, it was pitched upon; which was no ſooner ſignified to the earl, but with admirable celerity he advances, and on the twentieth of June came into the country of Padua.

The coming of this captain into Italy gave such courage to the Venetians, and all their subjects, that whereas before they despaired of their own safety, they began now to think of conquering others. The earl in the first place marches to the relief of Verona, to stop whose passage Nicolas with his army advances to Soave, a castle seated between the territories of Vicenza and Verona, and encompassed with a ditch, cut from Soave to the marshes of Adice. The earl, perceiving his passage through the plain thus impeached, thought he might yet pass the mountain way, and so get between his enemy and Verona, imagining, that either Nicolas would not believe he would adventure that way, being so rough and craggy, or when he did believe it, it would be too late to stop him; and having provided eight days provisions, advances with his whole army over the mountains and arrives under Soave in the plain: for though Nicolas had fortified some posts, and raised some bulwarks to impeach his passage this way, yet the works and guards, as not much regarded, proved too weak to withstand him. Nicolas therefore seeing his enemy, contrary to all imagination got into the plain, that he might not be forced to fight upon disadvantage, retreated on the other side the Adice, and the earl without any opposition enters Verona.

The earl proving thus successful in his first attempt, and with so much ease raising the siege of Verona, the next thing to be undertaken was the relief of Brescia. The city is so well seated upon

the lake of Garda, that though it be blocked up by land, it may still be supplied with provisions by water; which had made the duke, with several strong parties, fortify himself upon the lake, and in the commencement of his victories, had garrisoned all those towns that might send Brescia any relief by the lake. The Venetians likewise had gallies there, but not of strength enough to oppose the duke. The earl therefore judged it requisite, with his army on land, to assist those on the water; for, by their joint power he was in hopes he might easily win the battle. He encamped therefore against Badilino, a castle seated upon the lake, hoping, if he took that, the others would surrender. The earl in this enterprize found fortune averse to him; for here great numbers of his soldiers fell sick, so that forced to raise his siege he retreated to Zemo, a castle of Verona, a place both plentiful and heathful. Nicolas seeing the earl retired, to the end he might not let slip this opportunity of making himself lord of the lake, leaves his camp at Vegosia, and with a select party goes to the lake, where with great courage and fury he assaults the Venetian fleet, and took almost all of them. After which victory, most of the castles remaining on the lake surrendered to him.

The Venetians terrified at these losses, and fearing least Brescia should yield also, by messengers and letters earnestly solicited the earl to its relief. And the earl perceiving all hopes of relieving it by the lake cut off, and that by the champain way it

was impossible, by reason of the trenches, ditches, bastions and bulwarks raised by Nicolas, amongst which, entering against an enemies army, he hazarded a manifest defeat and loss, he determined by the way of the mountains, as he had saved Verona, so to succour Brescia. The earl, having formed this design, decamps from Zemo, and by the vale of Acri, marches to the vale of St. Andrea, and comes to Torboli and Penda, on the lake of Garda, thence to Tenna; for to reach Brescia he must of necessity take that castle: Nicolas, having intelligence of the earl's intention, draws off his army to Peschiera, and thence, with the marquis of Mantua, and some chosen men of his own, goes to face the earl; whom engaging with he was defeated, his army, quite broken and disordered, put to flight, many of his men taken, and the rest escaping, part to the camp, and part to the gallies. Nicolas saved himself in Tenna, but night being come on, he began to imagine, that if he staid there till break of day, it would be impossible but he must fall into the enemies hands; so to avoid a certain danger, he adventured a very doubtful one. Of all his men, Nicolas had none now with him but one servant a German, of very great strength of body, and who had ever been very faithful to him. This man Nicolas persuaded to put him in a sack, and throwing him on his shoulders, as if he were carrying some forage for his master, convey him to some place of safety. The camp lay still round about Tenna; but overjoyed with their

victory the day before, were in great disorder, and very negligent of their guards ; so that it was easy for the German to secure his master ; for having laid him on his shoulders, and being clad like a porter, he passed without any stop through the whole camp, and brought him safely to his own men.

Had this victory been as diligently prosecuted, as it was fortunately won, it might have proved of greater advantage to Brescia, and more happy to the Venetians. But the true use not being made of it, the joy was soon blown over, and Brescia remained in the same distress as before. For Nicolas, being returned to his camp, began to contrive with himself, how by some successful exploit he might wipe off the stain of his late defeat, and deprive the Venetians of all means to relieve Brescia. He knew very well the situation of the citadel of Verona, and by some prisoners by him taken in that war, had understood both how slenderly it was guarded, and in what manner it might easily be surprized. Wherefore he imagined that fortune presented him with an opportunity to regain his honour, and convert the enemies joy for their late victory, into grief for a more considerable loss.

The city of Verona is seated in Lombardy, at the foot of those mountains that divide Italy and Germany, so that the city partakes somewhat both of the plain and mountain, the river Adice springing out of the vale of Trent, at its enterance into Italy, distends not itself immediately through the

plain, but turning to the left hand along the side of the mountain, finds out the city, and passes through the middle of it; not that it divides both parts equally, for it leaves a much greater proportion on the side of the plain, than of the mountain. On the part towards the mountain are two castles, one called St. Peter's, and the other St. Felice, which are stronger by nature than by art, and being seated very high, command the whole city. On the plain on this side Adice, and upon the walls of the town, are two other fortresses, distant the one from the other about a thousand paces, one of which is called the old, and the other the new citadel; from one of these to the other, within the city, is a wall built, which looks like a string to the bow made by the ordinary walls of the city; and all the space between one and the other is filled with inhabitants, and called Burgo de St. Zeno. These citadels, and this borough, Nicolas designed to surprize, which he thought might easily be done, as well because of the usual negligence of the guards, as believing the late victory had made them more careless, well knowing that no enterprize in war succeeds better than that, which the enemy is confident you cannot compass, or dare not attempt.

Having therefore chosen out a strong party, he, with the marquis of Mantua, goes by night to Verona, and without being discovered, scales and takes the new citadel, and from thence with his infantry, entering the town, breaks open the gates

of St. António, to give admission to his horse. Those who, for the Venetians, had the guard of the old citadel, hearing first a noise, when the guards of the new cittadel were slain, and after, when the gate was broke open, knowing they were enemies, rung out the bell, and founded an alarm; which the citizens hearing, were all in amazement and confusion; and those who had most courage took arms, and ran to the rector's or governor's palace. Nicolas's party had in the mean time sackt the borough of St. Zeno, and was proceeding forward. The citizens finding the duke's forces were got into the city, and perceiving no way how to defend themselves, advised the Venetian governors to retreat into the fortresses, and save both their persons, and the city; declaring it much better for them to save their own lives, and preserve the riches of the city to a more fortunate conjuncture, than by opposing the present fury, die themselves, and impoverish the town for ever. Whereupon the rectors or governors, and all Venetians whatsoever, took the castle of St. Felice for their refuge; after which the chief citizens went to find out Nicolas, and the marquis of Mantua, beseeching them, that they would rather with honour enjoy that city rich and flourishing, than to their own infamy suffer it to be made poor and miserable; especially, since from their former masters they had not deserved thanks, nor from them hate for defending themselves. They were both by Nicolas and the marquis comforted, and as much as possibly they could, in

that heat of military license, the city saved from spoil. And, because they were assured that the earl would endeavour the recovery of the city, they strove with all imaginable art and industry to get the strong places into their hands, and those they could not, they began to divide from the town with works and trenches, that the enemy might have no entrance from thence. Count Francis was at Tenna when the first news of this surprize was brought him, and he looked upon it at first as an idle story; but when by more certain intelligence he understood it to be real truth, he determined with diligence and expedition to repair so great a neglect; and though most of his principal officers advised him, that leaving both Verona and Brescia to themselves, he should make an attempt upon Vicenza, that he might not by staying here be besieged by his enemies; yet he would not consent, but resolved to make trial of his fortune in the recovery of that city; and turning in the midst of these doubts and suspensions to the Venetian proveditors, and to Bernardetto de Medici, who was commissary for the Florentines, he promised them certainly to regain the city if but one castle held out. Putting therefore his army in order, with inexpressible celerity he marches towards Verona. Upon advice of which Nicolas believed, that, as his officers had before advised, he was designed for Vicenza; but seeing him turn his front towards the town, and march directly up to the castle of St. Felice, he began to give orders for defence, but

all too late; for the trenches and works were not finished, and the soldiers, out of greediness of the spoil, were all divided and in disorder: nor could they be drawn together soon enough to make head against the earl's forces before they had reached the castle; by which they descended into the city, and most happily, to the great shame and disgrace of Nicolas, and his whole party, repossessed it. Nicolas, together with the marquis of Mantua, fled first into the citadel, and afterwards into the plains of Mantua; where rallying the remains of their shattered forces, they went and again joined themselves with the camp at Brescia. Thus was Verona in the space of four days both taken and lost by the ducal army.

After this victory, winter being somewhat advanced, and the season very cold, the earl, having with much danger and difficulty supplied Brescia with provisions, took up his quarters at Verona, and gave order that some galleys should be built at Torboli, to the end, that by the first of the spring he might be strong enough both by land and water to relieve Brescia. The duke perceiving the war here at a stand, and his hopes of becoming master of Brescia and Verona utterly cut off, and all this occasioned by the Florentine money and councils, whom, since neither the injuries received from the Venetians could provoke, nor the large promises he had made them persuade, to alienate their amity from that republic, he resolved, that they might nearer home reap the fruit of those seeds

they had sown, to invade Tuscany; to which he was both by Nicolas, and the banished Florentines, encouraged; the first moved to it out of a desire to seize the estates of Braccio, and drive the earl out of La Marca; the other out of hopes to be restored to their country; and each had urged the duke by the most pressing arguments they could invent, to comply with their desires. Nicolas told him, that he might both send him into Tuscany, and still maintain the siege at Brescia: for being lord of the lake, and his camp towards the land well fortified and furnished with all stores of war, having likewise other captains and soldiers to oppose the earl, should he attempt any other design, which would be almost a madness to do, till he had relieved Brescia, and the relief of it was in a manner impossible: so that he might both wage war in Tuscany, and still continue it in Lombardy. Besides, the Florentines would be constrained, as soon as he had entered their territories, either to call home the earl, or be lost, and which soever of these things happened gave him a certain victory. The banished Florentines alleged, that as soon as Nicolas should with his army draw nigh to Florence, it was impossible but the people, quite tired with heavy taxes, and the more burdensome insolence of their great men, would take up arms against their magistrates; and, that the approaches were easy to Florence, and the way open by Casentino, by means of the friendship between that earl and Rinaldo de Albizi: insomuch that the

duke, being before inclined to it, was by their persuasions fully confirmed.

Mean while the Venetians, though it was a very bitter winter, left not off soliciting the earl to relieve Brescia with his whole army; in which the earl denied to comply with them, as a thing not to be done till spring, and in that time they might get a fleet in readiness, and succour them both by water and land. But at this the Venetians were disgusted, and slackened their provisions, so that their army began to waste away. All which things being certainly known to the Florentines, extremely dismayed them, seeing the war brought to their own doors, and little good done in Lombardy: nor were they less perplexed with the jealousies they had conceived of the forces of the church; not that the pope was then their enemy, but that the patriarch, who had more command in that army than the pope himself, bore them a deadly hatred.

This was John Vetteleschi Cornettano, first apostolic notary, then bishop of Ricanati, afterwards made patriarch of Alexandria, and at last cardinal, with the title of Cardinal of Florence. This man was both courageous and crafty, and knew so well how play to his game, that he was extremely beloved by the pope, and by him made general of all the church's forces, and commanded in chief in all the pope's wars in Tuscany, Romania, the kingdom, and at Rome: whereby he got such power in the army, and over the pope, that the last was afraid

to command him, and the first would obey none but him. This cardinal being with his forces in Rome, at the time that the rumour was spread abroad, that Nicolas designed to invade Tuscany, redoubled the Florentines fears; the cardinal having ever since Rinaldo's banishment been a profest enemy of their state, because the agreement made in Florence by his intermission was not observed, but rather managed to Rinaldo's prejudice, being the occasion of his laying down arms, and giving his enemies the power of expelling him. So that the heads of the state were fearful the time was now come of repairing Rinaldo's damages, if he joined with Nicolas in the invasion of Tuscany. And they were the more doubtful of it, because they imagined Nicolas's present departure out of Lombardy very unseasonable, leaving a conquest almost perfected, for a very uncertain and doubtful one, which they could not believe, without some hidden intelligence or secret intrigue, he would ever do. Of these their suspicions they advertised the pope, who was already sensible of his error in giving too much authority to others.

But whilst the Florentines were in this suspense, fortune shewed them the way how they might secure themselves against the cardinal. This republic kept in all places very diligent spies to search all letters carried too and fro, that they might the better discover any contrivance against their state. It happened that at Monte Pulciano some letters were taken, which the patriarch, without the pope's

consent, had written to Nicolas Piccinino ; and although they were written in unusual characters, and the matter so knotty and implicate, that no certain sense could be made of them, yet that obscurity, joined with the practices of the enemy, so affrighted the pope, that he determined to provide for his own safety, and committed the charge of the affair to Antonio Rido of Padua, then governor of the castle of Rome. He, having his commission, prepared to put it in execution as soon as opportunity presented. The patriarch had designed to go into Tuscany, and being the next day to depart Rome, he sent to the governor, that on the morning early he should meet him on the castle-bridge, for he had something to discourse with him. Antonio thought now his opportunity was offered, and having given instructions to his guards, at the time waits for the patriarch on the bridge, which being very near the castle, for the more security of it had a draw-bridge in the middle, which, as soon as the patriarch was past, stopping there to discourse with him, he made a sign to his men to pull up the bridge ; so that the patriarch in an instant, from general of an army, was become prisoner to the governor of a fortress. The people that followed him began at first to make a tumult ; but understanding it was the pope's pleasure, they were pacified. And the governor comforting the patriarch with kind and courteous speeches, giving hopes all would be well ; he answered, " That great men " were never taken to be let loose again ; for those

“ who deserved not to be imprisoned, did not deserve to be set at liberty ;” and so, soon after he died in prison.

After whose death the pope appointed Lodovic, patriarch of Aquileia, general of the forces ; and having hitherto refused to concern himself in the wars between the league and the duke, he was now content to become a party, and promised to be in readiness, for the defence of Tuscany, with four thousand horse, and two thousand foot.

Thus were the Florentines rid of this fear ; yet still the fear of Nicolas remained, by reason of the confusion of the affairs of Lombardy, and differences of opinion between the Venetians and the earl. Wherefore to beget a right understanding, they sent Neri di Gino Capponi, and Giulian d'Avanzati, to Venice, giving them commission to conclude how the war should be managed the year ensuing ; and to Neri they gave farther order, that having understood the minds of the Venetians, he should go to the earl to know his, and to persuade him to such things as might be advantageous to the league, and necessary for their safety. These ambassadors were scarce got to Ferrara, but they had intelligence that Nicolas Piccinino with six thousand horse had passed the Po, which made them hasten all they could, and being come to Venice, they found that whole senate resolute, that Brescia should without any delay be relieved ; for, that the city was not able to hold out till spring, or till a navy were built ; but if they found they had no o-

ther reliance, would yield, which would make the duke absolutely victorious, and all their territories on the main land would be utterly lost. Whereupon Neri goes to Verona to hear what the earl could allege against it; who demonstrated by solid reasons, that the marching his army in that season towards Brescia would be to no purpose for the present, and a future impeachment of the design; for both in regard to the time and situation, they could do Brescia no good, but only disorder and tire his army; so that when spring came that was fit for action, he must be forced to return to Verona for a supply of things necessary for the service, which would be vainly consumed in winter, and so all the time proper for war would be spent in going and coming.

There were with the earl to consult of these things with him at Verona, signior Orfatto Justiniani, and signior John Pisani. After many disputes, it was concluded, that the Venetians for the succeeding year should give the earl eighty thousand ducats, and to their other soldiers forty ducats each; and that they should sollicit, that they might with the whole army take the field, and fall upon the duke's territories, that in fear of his own estates he might recall Nicolas out of Tuscany. Upon this conclusion they returned to Verona. The Venetians, the sum of money being so great, provided all things slowly. In the mean time Nicolas Piccinino proceeded on his voyage, and had already reached Romania, where he had so far wrought with the sons

of Pandolfo Malatesta, that deserting the Venetians they joined with the duke.

This revolution much displeased Venice, but much more Florence, who were in hopes, by that way, to make some resistance against Nicolas; but seeing the Malatesti rebelled, they were dismayed, principally because they feared least their captain Piero Giampagolo Orfino should be routed and rifled, and they thereby left disarmed. Nor did the news less daunt the earl, who was afraid, by Nicolas's invasion of Tuscany, he should lose La Marca. And desirous then to save his own estates he comes to Venice, and being introduced into the senate, he declared, "How that an expedition in-
" to Tuscany would be advantageous to the whole
" league; for the war was to be prosecuted where
" the general and army of the enemy lay, and not
" where his towns and castles stood; for by de-
" feating the army the war is brought to an issue,
" but by taking towns, and leaving the army in-
" tire, the war oftentimes breaks out the fiercer:
" affirming, that La Marca and Tuscany were
" both lost, if Nicolas were not briskly opposed;
" and they once in the enemies hands, there was
" no remedy but Lombardy must needs follow;
" but though a remedy might be found to prevent
" it, he did not understand why he should aband-
" on his own subjects, and his own friends; for
" he came into Lombardy a lord, and would not
" return thence a private leader." To all which the senate replied: "That it was apparent that if

“ he once with his army went out of Lombardy,
 “ nay if he did but repass the Po, all their estates
 “ on the main were lost; nor would they be at
 “ any farther expence to defend them: for he can
 “ not be thought wise who attempts to defend a
 “ thing he is certain to lose; and the infamy is
 “ less to lose estate only, than estate and money
 “ too; but when their dominion was once extir-
 “ pate, it would soon be discovered of what im-
 “ portance the Venetian reputation was to the sup-
 “ port of Romania and Tuscany: and therefore
 “ they were of a quite different opinion to his; for
 “ they believed, that whoever overcame in Lom-
 “ bardy would overcome elsewhere, and the con-
 “ quest now was easy, the duke’s estates being by
 “ Nicolas’s departure left so weak, that they may
 “ be past repair before he shall or can recal Nico-
 “ las, or provide other remedies. That whoever
 “ examined the bottom of things would find, that
 “ the duke’s sole end in sending Nicolas into Tus-
 “ cany, was to draw the earl from Lombardy, and
 “ remove the seat of the war from his own house
 “ elsewhere: so that if the earl followed him, un-
 “ less upon an extreme necessity, he would have
 “ the glory to see his designs accomplished, and
 “ his intentions brought to effect; but if they
 “ maintained the army in Lombardy, and made
 “ the best provision they could in Tuscany, he
 “ would discern his mistake too late, when he had
 “ utterly lost Lombardy, and conquered nothing
 “ in Tuscany.”

Thus every one having said, and replied, according to his opinion, they concluded to attend patiently some days to discover what might be the effects of the Malatesti's agreement with Nicolas, and if Piero Giampagolo might yet do the Florentines any service, and whether the pope would be steadfast to the league as he had promised. Some few days after this conclusion, intelligence was brought, that the Malatesti had made that agreement more for fear than any evil intention; that Piero Giampagolo was marched towards Tuscany with his forces, and that the pope testified more alacrity to assist the league than at first; which advice settled the earl's mind, and he was content to stay in Lombardy, and that Neri Capponi should return to Florence with one thousand of his horse, and five hundred others: and if things fell out so that there was a necessity of the earl's presence, he should but write, and he leaving all things else would go. So Neri with his forces came to Florence in April, and the same day arrived there likewise Giampagolo.

Mean while, Nicolas Piccinino, having settled affairs in Romagua, designed to make a descent into Tuscany; and intending to pass by the Alps of St. Bennet, and the valley of Montone, he found that passage so well guarded by the valour of Nicolas da Pisa, that he thought all his strength would be too feeble to force it. The Florentines upon this sudden invasion, being unprovided both of soldiers and leaders, had sent several of their

citizens with foot, levied in haste, to guard those passes of the Alps; among whom was Bartholomew Orlandini knight, to whom was consigned the guard of the castle of Marradi, and that pass of the Alps. Nicolas Piccinino perceiving he could not force the pass of St. Bennet, because of the valour of the guardian, thought he might easily gain that of Marradi, because of the cowardize of the man appointed to defend it. Marradi is a castle seated at the foot of those Alps that divide Tuscany and Romania; but on that part looking towards Romania, and in the beginning of the vale of Lamona, though it be without a wall, yet the river, the mountain, and the inhabitants, make it strong: for the men are warlike and faithful, and the river has so worn into the land, and made such deep caves and holes, that by the way of the vale it is impossible to approach it, if a little bridge be defended; and on the mountain side it is so steep and craggy, that it renders it very strong, and easily defensible: yet the cowardize of signior Bartholomew made those men faint-hearted too, and the castle seem weak and defenceless; for no sooner heard he a rumour of the enemies approach, but abandoning all this strength, he fled away with his men, and never stopt till he came to the borough of St. Lorenzo.

Nicolas entering the deserted places, full of wonder that they were not defended, and alacrity that he had gained them, passes forward into Mugello, where he takes several castles, and at Puliciano sits down with his army; from whence he overruns,

and forages all the country as far as the mountains of Fiesole, and grew so bold, that he passed the Arno, spoiling and destroying the country within three miles of Florence. Yet were not the Florentines dismayed, but first of all applied themselves to settling the government, of which they had little reason to doubt, so much good-will the citizens bore Cosmo; and besides, the prime offices of the city were reduced into the hands of a few potent citizens, who with their severity bridled those who were any way discontented, or desirous of novelty. They had likewise understood with what forces Neri, by the agreement in Lombardy, was to return; and in like manner were in expectation of the pope's troops, which hopes, till Neri's return, kept them in heart; who finding the city in these disorders resolved to draw forth the army, and so far awe Nicolas, that he should not dare so freely to ransack the country; and drawing a body of foot out of the people, with those horse he had, he marches out and retakes Remoli which the enemy had garrisoned; where encamping, he prevented Nicolas's incursions, and put the citizens in hopes that the enemy would be forced to remove farther from their walls. Nicolas seeing that, at what time the Florentines were without any force in the city, no tumult nor commotion happened, and understanding how quietly and securely they lived within, thought it in vain to lose more time, but resolved on some other attempt, that so the Florentines, sending their forces after him, he

might necessitate them to come to a battle; in which, if he had the better, he doubted not but all things else would succeed prosperously and well.

There was in Nicolas's army Francis earl of Poppi, who when the enemy lay in Mugello, revolted from the Florentines, with whom he was before in league. And though they, having some suspicions of him, to engage his fidelity had increased his pay, and made him governor of all their towns adjacent to his; yet so powerful is the love of factions in men, that no advantage nor fear could make him forget the affection he bore signior Rinaldo, and those who had formerly governed the state; wherefore no sooner heard he of Nicolas's approach, but he joined with him, and with all earnestness solicited him to withdraw from the city, and march into Casentino, setting forth the strength of the place, and how he might with ease from thence streighten his enemies. Nicolas follows his advice, and being come into Casentino, takes Romeno and Bibiena, and then lays siege to the castle of St. Nicolas. This castle is seated at the foot of those hills which divide Casentino from the vale of Arno; which standing high, and having within a strong garrison, made a stout resistance; notwithstanding Nicolas with engines throwing stones, and other such artillery, continually battered it. This siege had continued for above twenty days; during which, the Florentines endeavoured to draw together their forces, and had already assembled, un-

der several captains, three thousand horse commanded by Piero Giampagolo as general, and Neri Capponi and Bernardo de Medici as commissaries.

To these came four messengers from the castle of St. Nicolas to beseech them to relieve them: the commissaries, having well examined the situation of the place, found there was no way to bring them relief, but by the mountains which ascend from the vale of Arno, the tops of which would be possessed by the enemys forces before theirs could reach them, they having the shorter way, and these having no means to conceal their coming: whereupon the commissaries, praising their fidelity, gave them orders when they could no longer hold out, to surrender. So Nicolas took the castle in two and thirty days, and the losing so much time for so small a purchase was, in a great measure, the occasion of the loss of his whole business; for had he continued with his army near Florence, he had put those which governed the city to great streights, who must with more caution have strained money from the people, with more difficulty have raised men, or indeed made any other provision whilst the enemy was on the backs of them, than when he was farther off; and perhaps many might have been inclinable to have secured themselves from Nicolas by peace, since they were not able to do it by war. But the desire count Poppi had to revenge himself of some governors of castles who had for a long time been his enemies, made him give this counsel; and for his satisfaction only Ni-

colas followed it, which proved the ruin both of the one and the other: and it is very rare that private passions do not prove the impeachment of public good.

Nicolas, pursuing his victory, takes Raffina and Chiufi. In these parts count Poppi persuaded him to stay, demonstrating, how he might by dispersing his forces in Chiufi, Caprese and La Pieu, become lord of the mountains, and at pleasure make his descents into Casentino, and into the vales of Arno, Chiana and Teveri, attending every motion of the enemy. But Nicolas, considering the roughness and cragginess of the place, told him, " That his " horses could not eat stones," and so went thence to the burough of St. Sepulchro, where he found a kind reception. Whilst he was here, he made trial to gain the friendship of the citizens of Castello, but they being friends to the Florentines would not hearken to him. Then being desirous to have the Perugians at his devotion, he went with forty horse to Perugia, where, being their citizen, he was honourably received, but in few days they grew jealous of him. He there treated many things with the legate, and with the Perugians, but perfected nothing: so receiving from them eight thousand ducats he returned to his army. Next he drove a design how to get Cortona from the Florentines; but the plot being discovered before execution of it, all came to nothing.

Among the chief citizens of that city was Bartholomew Senso: he going, by order of the go-

vernor, to take charge of the guard at one of the gates, was by a countryman, his friend, desired not to go unless he had a mind to be killed; whereupon Bartholomew would needs know the meaning and depth of the advice, and thereby understood all the circumstances of the plot, which he revealed to the governor; who, having secured the chief of the conspirators, doubles the guards at the gates, and stays, expecting according to the appointment made, that Nicolas should come; who comes by night at the assigned hour, but finding he was discovered retreats to his quarters.

Whilst these things were agitating in Tuscany, to the duke's small advantage, Lombardy was not at quiet to his great damage and loss: for as soon as the season permitted, earl Francis draws his army into the field, and the Venetians having prepared a navy on the lake, he resolves first of all to make himself master of the water, judging if that were done, other things would easily follow. Wherefore with the Venetian fleet he makes an assault upon the duke's, overcomes them, and takes all the castles that were garrisoned by Philip; upon which the ducal forces, which by land besieged Brescia, hearing the news of these losses, drew off, and thus after three years siege Brescia was relieved. In pursuit of this victory the earl follows his enemies, who were retreated to Soncino, a castle on the river Oglio, dislodges them, and makes them retreat to Cremona, where the duke made head, and on that part defended his estates. But

the earl streightning him every day more and more, fearful to lose part or all of his estates, he began to be sensible of his unadvisedness in sending Nicolas into Tuscany, and to correct his error, he writ to Nicolas, letting him know in what condition his affairs were, and upon what tottering terms he stood, and therefore desiring him, that leaving Tuscany, he would with all speed repair into Lombardy.

During this interval, the Florentines having assembled all their forces, and joined with the pope's, made head at Anghiari, a castle seated at the foot of those mountains that divide the vale of Tevere and the vale of Chiana, distant from the burough of St. Sepulchro four miles, a level ground fit for horse service, and indeed apt for all actions of war. But because the Florentines had intelligence of the earl's victories, and of the revocation of Nicolas, they thought the work already done before they drew their swords, wherefore they wrote to their commissaries that they should wave the engagement, for Nicolas could not stay many days in Tuscany. This commission coming to Nicolas's knowlege, and seeing the necessity of his departure, that he might leave no stone unturned, he determined they should fight, believing he might find them unprovided and out of order, as not designing a battle; to which he was encouraged by signior Rinaldo, count Poppi, and other banished Florentines, who beheld their own manifest ruin if Nicolas went thence; but by engaging him to a

battle they were in hopes either to gain the day, or lose themselves honourably.

Having thus resolved, the army advanced between the cities of Castello and the Borough, and being come to the Borough, without their enemies having any notice, they took from that town two thousand men, who confiding in the valour and promises of the general, and withal greedy of spoil, followed him. Thence in battle-array Nicolas marches directly towards Anghiari, and was come within less than two miles, when Michaelotto Attenduli espied a great dust, and conceiving it must be the enemy, gives the alarm. The tumult was great in the Florentine camp; for they generally encamping without any discipline, to their disorder, negligence was now added; for they not only believed their enemy at a great distance from them, but that he rather was intent upon flight than fight; so that every one was disarmed and wandering from their tents, whither either their fancy, or the coolness of the shade led them: yet such was the diligence of the commissaries and general, that before their enemies got up to them they were armed and on horseback, ready to receive the charge: and as Michaelotto was the first that discovered the enemy, so he was the first that made head against them, advancing with his troops to make good the bridge of the river, which crosses the way not very far from Anghiari. And Piero Giampagolo having, before the enemies coming, caused the ditches to be filled and levelled, which

were on each side the road, between the bridge and Anghiari, Michaelotto placing himself against the bridge, Simoncino the pope's colonel, with the legate, drew upon the right hand of him, and Piero Giampagolo and the Florentine commissaries on the left, and the infantry was disposed on both hands on the banks of the river: so that the enemy had no open way to come and assault them but directly over the bridge; nor the Florentines any where else to fight but on the bridge, save only they had given orders to the foot, that if the enemies infantry went out of the way to flank the men at arms, they should charge them with their cross-bows, that they might not wound our horses in the flank as they passed the bridge. The first that charged were by Michaelotto bravely received, and soon by him repulsed; but Astorre and Francis Piccinino coming up with their select troops, they charged him so furiously, that they gained the bridge, and drove him to the foot of the hill that goes up to Anghiari; but they were again repulsed, and driven back over the bridge by those that charged them in the flank. The fight continued thus for two hours, and sometimes Nicolas, and sometimes the Florentines were masters of the bridge. And though upon the bridge they had no advantage against one another, yet, both on this and that side the bridge Nicolas fought at great disadvantage: for when any party of Nicolas's passed the bridge, they found great bodies of their enemies, which by the levelling of the

ditches had room to draw up, and those which were weary were still seconded by fresh reserves: but when the Florentines happened to pass, Nicolas could not conveniently send in fresh supplies, because of the straightness and narrowness of the way, inclosed with ditches and trenches; so that though many times Nicolas's men had passed the bridge, yet by the supply of fresh enemies they were always driven back. But when the Florentines had effectually won the bridge, and their men entered into the road, Nicolas wanted time, through the fury of his enemies, and narrowness of the place, to draw in fresh supplies; so that the van falling back upon the rear, and disordering one another, all the army was forced to fly, and most without knowing a reason for it, ran towards the Burgo. Then fell the Florentine foldiers to the plunder, which in men; money, and horses amounted to a great value; for with Nicolas there saved themselves not above a thousand horse. Those inhabitants of the burough of St. Sepulchro, that came for prey, were made a prey of, being all taken and put to ransom, their colours and carriages being also taken. Yet this victory was much more advantageous to Tuscany than it was prejudicial to the duke; for had the Florentines lost the day, Tuscany had been his; but his loss was nothing but arms and horses, which good store of money would soon recruit. Neither could ever war be made in another country with less danger than in these times; for in so total a rout, and so

long a fight, which lasted four hours, there died but one man, and he not by any valiant stroke, but falling from his horse was trode to death; with so much security did men then fight! for being all on horse-back, and covered with arms, they were, while they fought, secure from death, and when they yielded there was no reason to kill them; so that fighting they were saved by their arms, and yielding by quarter.

This battle, both for matters happening in and after it, is a great example of the ill management of those wars: for the enemy overcome, and Nicolas fled into Burgo, the commissaries would have followed him, and besieged that place to complete their victory; but many of the captains and soldiers positively refused to obey them, telling them, they would first secure their plunder, and dress the wounded, and then perhaps go. But what is more remarkable is, that the next day at noon, without any leave of, or respect to the commissaries or general, they went to Arezzo, and there leaving what spoil they had got, returned to Anghiari, a thing so contrary to all military order, or any warlike discipline, that any small remnant of a well governed army might easily, and deservedly have snatched from them that victory they had undeservedly gained; and it is worth our wonder to consider how such an ill-trained army should have so much courage in them as to know how to conquer; but it is much more amazing that any enemy should

have so much cowardize as to be beaten by such disorderly people.

Whilst the Florentine soldiers were going and coming from Arezzo, Nicolas had time to depart with his people from Burgo, taking his way towards Romania, with whom the Florentine rebels likewise fled, who, beholding themselves deprived of all hopes of ever returning to Florence, divided themselves in several places of Italy, or out of it, according as suited with every man's conveniency; of whom, signior Rinaldo chose Ancona for his residence; from whence to gain himself a heavenly country, since he had lost that here on earth, he went to the sepulchre of Christ, and upon his return thence, at the marriage of one of his daughters, fell down suddenly and died, in which fortune seemed to favour him, that in the least unhappy day of all his banishment she let him die. He was a man worthy of honour in all fortunes, and would have certainly enjoyed more than he did, had nature let him been born in an united city; for many qualities of his offended in a divided city, which in one united would have preferred him.

The commissaries, as soon as their men were returned from Arezzo, and Nicolas gone, presented themselves before Burgo; the Borghesi would have surrendered themselves to the Florentines, but they refused to accept them; however in treating the matter the pope's legate conceived a suspicion, that the Florentine commissaries had dealt underhand to rob the church of that town: so that many bitter

and injurious words passed, and there had happened some disorder between the Florentines and ecclesiastics, had the dispute lasted much longer; but things being concluded as the legate would have them, all was pacified.

Whilst these debates were about Burgo, intelligence was brought that Nicolas Piccinino was gone towards Rome, and others said towards La Marca; whereupon the legate and Sforza's horse thought it convenient to go to Perugia, to be ready to assist either Rome or La Marca, if Nicolas should turn either way; and over them was appointed Bernardo Medici; and Neri, with the Florentine forces, ordered to reduce Casentino. According to this determination Neri marched to Rassina, and took it, and going forward regained Bibenia, Prato Vecchio, and Romenia, and from thence went and besieged Poppi, surrounding it at two posts, one in the plains of Certomondi, and the other on the little hill in the way to Franzoli. This earl, seeing himself forsaken by God and man, had shut himself up in Poppi, not out of any hopes of assistance, but to get the best terms he could: being now begirt by Neri he demanded conditions, and found them such as he might reasonably at such a time expect; that he should depart with his wife and children, and such goods as he could carry with him, and leave his lands and estates to the Florentines. And whilst they were upon capitulating, he came down upon the bridge over Arno, which washes one side

of the town, and in a doleful and afflicted manner spoke thus to Neri.

“ Had I taken right measures of fortune, and
 “ your power, I should have appeared now as a
 “ friend to congratulate your victory, and not as
 “ an enemy to petition you somewhat to alleviate
 “ my misery and ruin ; but as the present chance
 “ is to you glorious and joyful, it is to me grievous
 “ and miserable. I had horses, arms, subjects,
 “ estate and riches, and who can wonder if I am
 “ loth to part with them? but if you must, and will
 “ command all Tuscany, all must of force obey
 “ you. Had I not committed this error, my fortune
 “ had never been known, nor you had opportunity
 “ to shew your liberality ; for if you yet
 “ restore me, you will leave to the world an eternal
 “ example of your clemency. Let your goodness
 “ surmount my crimes, and let at least this
 “ only house descend to those, of whom your ancestors
 “ have received many services.” Neri answered :
 “ As you have relied too much in those
 “ who were able to do little, so your offences against
 “ the state of Florence have been so high,
 “ that, considering the conjuncture of affairs, it is
 “ necessary you resign all your estate, and quit
 “ those places as an enemy to the Florentines,
 “ which you would not hold as their friend ; for
 “ you have given such an example as ought not to
 “ be born with, nor you suffered in a place where
 “ upon every change of fortune, you may damage
 “ the commonwealth : for it is your estates they

“fear, and not you, and if you could be a prince
 “in Germany, that city would rejoice at it, and
 “for the love of those ancestors you mention have
 “an esteem for you.” To which the earl in great
 anger answered; “He wished to see the Floren-
 “tines at a far greater distance.” And thus all kind
 discourse ceasing, the earl, seeing no other remedy,
 resigned his lands and his concerns to the Floren-
 tines, and with all his goods, wife and children,
 in tears departed, grieving to have lost an estate
 which his ancestors had, for four hundred years
 past, enjoyed. As soon as the news of these victo-
 ries was brought to Florence, it was by the princi-
 pal men in the state, and by the whole people, re-
 ceived with excessive joy; and because Bernardo
 Medici found the report false of Nicolas’s being
 gone either towards La Marca or Rome, he return-
 ed to find out Neri, and they together came to Flo-
 rence, where all those honours were in ample man-
 ner conferred on them, which according to the or-
 ders of that city can be allowed to victorious citi-
 zens, and they in triumph received by the senate,
 the captains, and the whole city.

B O O K VI.

IT ever was, and it is but reason it should be so, the end of those that make war, to enrich themselves, and impoverish their enemies; neither is victory for any other end sought after, nor conquest desired, but to make ourselves mighty, and our adversaries weak. Wherefore, whenever victory impoverishes, or conquest weakens, they either exceed, or come short of, those ends for which war is made. That prince or commonwealth is by the victories of war enriched, who utterly roots out his enemies, and remains sole lord of the spoils and ransoms: but those are by victory impoverished, who, though they overcome, cannot extirpate their enemies, and the spoils and ransoms belong not to them but to their soldiers. Such a prince is unhappy in loss, and most unhappy in victory; for losing he must undergo all the injuries the enemy can do him, and winning endure the offences of his friends, which, as they are less reasonable, are more insupportable; especially, seeing himself necessitated to burden his people with new taxes and impositions; and surely, no prince, that has any humanity, can rejoice at that victory which makes all his subjects sad. Ancient and well-ordered commonwealths were wont by victories to fill their

treasury with gold and silver, to distribute gifts among the people, to release their subjects from tax or tribute, and to exhibit solemn shows and triumphs: but those, of the times we are now writing of, first emptied their treasuries, and then impoverished the people, without securing them from their enemies; for only plundering their enemies, and neither keeping them prisoners nor killing them, the revenge was no longer deferred, than whilst the adverse leader was refurnished with horse and arms. Besides, the spoils and ransoms being the soldiers, the victorious princes, wanting them to employ in new wars, were forced to extract all their expences from the very bowels of their subjects; nor gained the people any other advantage by victory, but that the prince became thereby more greedy and less respectful of burdening; for the soldiers had brought the war to that pass, that both the conqueror and conquered, if they would command their own people, stood in daily need of more money, the one to re-inforce them, and the other to reward them. For the first, without being horsed and armed, could not, and the latter, without being rewarded, would not fight: whence it happened, that the one enjoyed little of the victory, and the other was scarce sensible of the loss; for the conquered had time to recruit, and the conquerors lost all opportunity of pursuing the victory.

This disorderly and perverse way of proceedings in war made Nicolas Piccinino be again remounted, before his loss was well known in Italy, and make

a fiercer war upon the enemy after his defeat than he did before : this enabled him after the discomfiture of Brescia to surprize Verona, and after the loss of most of his people at Verona, with a great army to invade Tuscany. By this means also, after the rout of Anghiari, before he reached Romagna, he grew stronger in the field than he was at first, and encouraged the duke of Milan once again to hope he might defend Lombardy, which, by reason of his absence, seemed to him almost lost. For whilst Nicolas made those stirrs in Tuscany, the duke was reduced to such terms, that he was very doubtful of his own estates, and feared his ruin would be compleated before Nicolas Piccinino, whom he had recalled, could come to succour him. Wherefore to put a stop to the earl's fury, and with policy to temporize where he could not with force oppose, he had recourse to those remedies which in the like condition had oft availed him, and to that end sends Nicolas d'Este, prince of Ferrara, to Peschiera, where the earl then was, who on his behalf persuades him to peace, demonstrating, that that war could be no ways advantageous to the earl; for if the duke were so weakened that he could no longer maintain his reputation, the earl would be the first would suffer; for the Venetians and Florentines having no further use, would have no further esteem of him: and for a full assurance that the duke indeed desired peace, he offered a conclusion of the marriage, promising to send his daughter to Ferrara, where, as soon as the peace

was concluded, he would join their hands. The earl made answer, that if the duke did faithfully desire peace, he might easily find it, as that which both the Venetians and Florentines wished for. True it was he could hardly believe it, knowing well that he never desired peace but out of a pure necessity; and as soon as that was past, his inclinations to war revived; nor could he give any credit about the promise of the marriage, having been so often mocked with it; but when the peace was concluded, he would act in that affair according to the advice of his friends.

The Venetians, who ordinarily are suspicious of their soldiers without cause, with reason entertained a suspicion of these practices, which the earl endeavouring to cancel, carried on the war with great briskness; yet his courage through ambition; and the Venetians through jealousy, was grown so lukewarm, that little or nothing was done that summer: so that Nicolas Piccinino being returned into Lombardy, and cold weather coming on, all the armies were drawn into their winter quarters; the earl into Verona, the duke into Cremona, the Florentine forces into Tuscany, and the Pope's into Romania. Which last, after the victory at Anghiari, attempted Furlì and Bologna, to recover them out of the hands of Francis Piccinino, who was governor there for his father; in which though they succeeded not, for Francis bravely defended them, yet did their coming so terrify those of Ravenna, that fearing they should be again reduced under the empire

of the church, by agreement with Ostasio of Polenta their lord, they submitted themselves into the power of the Venetians; who in requital of so fair a present, that Ostasio might not by force retake that, which for want of wit he had given them, they sent him together with his son to die in Candia.

The pope in these enterprizes, notwithstanding the victory at Anghiari, wanting money, sold the castle of Burgo St. Sepulchro to the Florentines for twenty five thousand ducats.

Affairs standing thus, and every one, by reason of the season of the year, thinking themselves secure from war, peace was no more talked of, especially by the duke, who, heartened by the winter, and Piccinino's return, broke off all manner of treaty with the earl, using all possible diligence to recruit Piccinino, and making all other provisions for a future war: which the earl, having intelligence of, went to Venice to advise with that senate how to manage the war for the year ensuing. Nicolas on the other side finding himself in order, and the enemy disordered, staid not for the coming of the spring, but in the coldest of winter passes the Adda, and entering into the territories of Brescia, becomes presently master of all that country, except Adula and Arci, where he likewise surprises and carries away two thousand of Sforza's horses who expected not the alarm. But what more displeased the earl, and frightened the Venetians was, that Ciarpellone, one of the earl's principal officers,

revolted from him. The earl upon this advice departs suddenly from Venice, and being arrived at Brescia, found that Nicolas Piccinino, after he had done this damage, was returned to his quarters: whereupon the earl, seeing the war extinct, thought it not convenient to rekindle it, but chose rather, since both the season and the enemy gave him a convenience of recruiting, to make use of it, that he might the better in the spring be able to revenge these affronts. He therefore made the Venetians recal those forces that served under the Florentines in Tuscany, and in the room of Gattamelata who was dead, desired Michaelotto Attendoli might command them.

The spring now coming on, Nicolas Piccinino first took the field, and surrounded Cignano, a castle twelve miles from Brescia: to the relief of which comes the earl, and both on one side and the other, the war was by these two generals managed according to their wonted custom. The earl, being doubtful of Bergamo, went and laid siege to Martinengo, a castle so seated, that taking it, he might at any time with ease relieve Bergamo; which city was sorely oppressed by Nicolas; who having made such provision, that he could not any way, but that of Martinengo, be disturbed by the enemy, he had so strongly fortified that castle, that it was necessary for the earl to come with all his forces to attack it. Whereupon Nicolas, with his whole army, gained such a post that he stopt all provisions from the earl, and with trenches and bulwarks so fortified himself,

that the earl, without apparent danger, could not assault him, reducing him to such streights that the besieger was in greater danger than those besieged in Martinengo; for famine would not suffer the earl to continue his siege, nor could he without apparent loss raise it; so there seemed to be a perfect victory prepared for the duke, and certain ruin for the Venetians and the earl.

But fortune, who never wants ways to assist her friends and discountenance her enemies, raised in the breast of Nicolas Piccinino, swelled with the hopes of this victory, such ambition and insolence, that without any respect either to the duke or himself, he sent to tell him, how that having a long time made war under his ensigns, and never gained so much earth for himself as would serve to bury him, he would now know what reward he would have for all his labours, since it was now in his power to make him lord of Lombardy, and put all his enemies into his hands: and conceiving that a certain victory ought to have a certain reward, he desired him to grant him the city of Piacenza, that so tired with tedious war, he might at length repose himself. Nor was he ashamed, in the conclusion, to threaten the duke, to give over the enterprize, if he granted not his request.

This haughty and insolent way of asking offended the duke, and incensed him in that manner, that he resolved rather to lose all than give his consent; and him that so many dangers and so many threats of his enemies could not bend, the insolence and

pride of his friends now made bow. Wherefore he resolved upon an agreement with the earl, to whom he sent Antony Guido Buono of Tortona to make offers of his daughter, with conditions of peace, which were greedily accepted by the earl and all the colleagues; and having privately sealed the articles, the duke sent to command Nicolas to make truce with the earl for a year, alleging, he was so tired with the vast charge, that he would not refuse a certain peace for an uncertain victory. Nicolas was strangely surprized at this order, not being able to imagine what should make the duke decline so assured a victory; for he could not believe that the not rewarding his friends could make him wave the destroying his enemies: wherefore, by all means he could best devise, he strove to oppose this determination; insomuch that the duke, to bring him to conformity, was forced to threaten, that if he would not consent, he would give him up as a prey to his own soldiers, or to the enemy. Nicolas hereupon obeys, but with the same regret of mind, as he that is forced to abandon his friends and country, lamenting his perverse fate, whilst formerly ill fortune, and now the duke, robbed him of victory over his enemies.

The truce made, the marriage between the lady Biancha and the earl was celebrated, and the city of Cremona assigned for her dower; and after that, in November one thousand four hundred and forty one, the peace was fully ratified, Francis Barbadi-co and Paul Trono being commissioners for the

Venetians, and signior Agnolo Acciavole for the Florentines. By this peace the Venetians came off gainers of Peschiera, Afola, and Leonato, castles in the marquisate of Mantua.

Peace thus settled in Lombardy, war still reigned in the kingdom, which not being to be pacified, proved the occasion of renewing it again in Lombardy. King Renate was, during the troubles in Lombardy, despoiled of all his realm, except the city of Naples; so that Alphonso, thinking he had the victory in his own hands, determined, whilst he lay at the siege of Naples, to take, from earl Francis, Benevento, and other his estates lying in the country adjacent; for he thought he without much hazard might succeed in it, the earl being employed in the wars of Lombardy; and his success was indeed conformable to his wishes, for with ease he possessed himself of all those lands. But peace being concluded in Lombardy, Alphonso was afraid lest the earl, because of his lost towns, would join with Renate; and Renate, for the same considerations, had hopes he would do so: whereupon he sent to the earl, encouraging him to come and assist a friend, and revenge himself of an enemy. On the other side, the king requested Philip, that in respect of the ancient friendship between them, he would give the earl such a diversion, that, forced to attend on weightier matters, he should be constrained to wave this. Philip complied with this request, not considering that thereby he disturbed the peace, which so much to his own disadvantage,

he had lately concluded: for he sent to pope Eugenius to inform him, that now was his time to regain those lands the earl had usurped from the church, and to effect it he offered him Nicolas Piccinino, he paying him while the war lasted, who since the conclusion of the peace, had taken up his quarters in Romania. The pope greedily entertained the motion, as well out of hate to the earl, as desire to regain his own; and though formerly he had with the same hopes been deceived by Nicolas, yet now the duke's intervention made him no more mistrustful, but he presently joined his forces with Nicolas, and assaulted La Marca. The earl startled at so sudden an onset, with all speed draws together his forces, and marches towards his enemies.

In the mean time, King Alphonso takes Naples, so that all that kingdom, except Castel Nuovo, was now in his power. Wherefore Renate, leaving a strong garrison in that castle, comes to Florence, where he was honourably received; whence, a few days after, seeing he could no longer maintain the war, he departs, and goes for Marsilia. Mean while Alphonso had taken Castel Nuovo, and the earl in La Marca proved somewhat inferior to the pope and Nicolas; whereupon he had recourse to the Venetians and Florentines for assistance of men and money, affirming, that if they did not now bridle the pope and the king's power while he was yet in being, they would afterwards in vain struggle for their own safety; for they would join with Phi-

lip, and amongst them divide all Italy. The Florentines and Venetians stood a while in suspense, somewhat doubtful to engage against the king and the pope, being at present employed in the affairs of Bologna; for Annibal Bentivogli had driven from that city Francis Piccinino, and to enable him to defend himself against the duke who favoured Francis, had craved aid of the Venetians and Florentines, who had not denied him; so that having engaged themselves in this affair, they could not at present resolve to assist the earl. But Annibal having defeated Francis Piccinino, and matters there seeming settled, the Florentines resolved to assist the earl; but first to be assured of the duke, they renewed the league with him, which the duke refused not; for he had only consented, that war should be made against the earl, while Renate was in arms, but seeing him vanquished, and utterly driven from the kingdom, he was not at all pleased that the earl should be spoiled of his estates. Wherefore he not only was willing that the earl should have assistance, but wrote to king Alphonso that he would be content to return back into his kingdom, and desist from making farther war; which, though Alphonso was somewhat unwilling to do, yet being obliged to the duke, he thought best to comply with him, and retired with his forces on the other side of Trento.

Whilst affairs went thus in Romanã, the Florentines were not quiet among themselves. There was in Florence, among the citizens of chief re-

putation in the government, Neri di Gino Capponi, of whose greatness Cosmo, more than of any others, stood in fear; for to the credit he had with the citizens, he had joined the favour of the soldiers. For having been often general of the Florentine army, his valour and great merit had gained their love; and besides, the remembrance of the victories, which they acknowledged from him and his father, the one having reduced Pisa under the Florentine power, and the other having defeated Nicolas Piccinino at Anghiari, made him respected by many, and feared by others, who desired no partners in the government.

Among many other prime leaders of the Florentine army was Baldaccio of Anghiari, a man, famous in war, and who in those times, either for knowledge, strength, or courage, had not his superior in Italy; and so much reputation had he gained among the infantry, for those he ever commanded, that they were at any time ready, in whatever enterprize he pleased to undertake, to follow him. This Baldaccio was a most intimate friend of Neri's; for he loved him for his courage, of which he had been often witness, which made the other citizens grow jealous of him; and judging the disbanding of him would be hazardous, and the retaining him yet more dangerous, they resolved to rid him out the way; in which design fortune proved favourable to them.

Bartholomew Orlandino was Gonfalonier of justice. He, as we have before related, having the

charge of the guard of Maradi, basely fled and deserted a pass, which nature itself in a manner defended. This cowardize so displeased Baldaccio, that he could not forbear both by words and letters to brand him for it; at the shame of which signior Bartholomew conceived such a secret regret and spleen, that, led on by an infamous desire of revenge, he thought nothing but the blood of his accuser could cancel his fault, or cover his blushes. Many other citizens were sensible of Bartholomew's malice; whereupon they inflamed him, and persuaded him of the facility of getting eased of such a reproach, thereby at once revenging his private injury, and freeing the state of a man whom they must either retain with fear, or dismiss with damage. Whereupon Bartholomew, having taken his resolve to assassinate Baldaccio, concealed many armed young men in his chamber, and Baldaccio being come upon the Piazza, where he usually every day walked, or came to treat with the magistrates about his entertainment; the Gonfalonier sent for him, and he, not having the least suspicion, obeyed; whom the Gonfalonier met, and walking with him several turns about the senate chambers, talking and discoursing with him concerning his pay, at length, when he saw his opportunity, being come near the room where the armed men lay hid, he gave the signal, and they immediately falling forth, and finding him alone and disarmed, soon slew him, and threw him out of the window, which looks from the palace to the custom-house; and thence

carrying him into the Piazza, cutting off his head, left him for all that day as a spectacle to the people. He left behind him one only son, born of Anna-lena his wife, who not long survived him. That virtuous lady, having lost her husband and son, would not again contract herself to any, but turning her house into a monastery, with many noble and virtuous ladies who consoled themselves with her, in a holy manner lived and died: whose memory, for the monastery by her founded and from her named, doth hitherto live and will live for ever.

This action somewhat diminished Neri's power, and lessened him both in reputation and friends. Nor did the prime ministers of state think this enough; for ten years being now spent since the foundation of their government, and the authority of the Balìa * expired, and many presuming both in words and deeds to exceed the limits thought requisite, the chiefs of the state judged it fit, for maintaining their authority, to revive the Balìa, whereby they might afresh give authority to their friends, and weaken their enemies; and therefore in the year one thousand four hundred and forty four, they, by the consent of the councils, created a new Balìa; which settled the offices, gave authority to a few to create the senate, reviving the chancellorship of the reformation, displacing Philip Peruzzi, and in his room constituting one that would act according to

† See the word explained in Vol. I. page 182.

the pleasure of the great men; who prolonged the confinements of many, imprisoned Simon Vespucci; removed from their honours and offices the Accoppiatori, as enemies to the state, and with them the sons of Peter Baroncelli, all the Seragli, Bartholomew Fortini, signior Francisco Castellani, and many others; and by this means regained their own power and authority, and abated the pride both of their known and suspected enemies. And having thus settled the state within, they applied themselves to affairs abroad.

Nicolas Piccinino being, as we before declared, deserted by the king Alphonso, and the earl, with the relief sent him by the Florentines, grown strong, he engages with Nicolas near Fermo, and gave him so total a rout, that Nicolas with the loss of most of his men hardly saved himself in Montecchio; where he fortified and so bravely defended himself, that in a short time he rallied all his people, and was grown able, with ease, to defend himself from the earl; especially winter coming on, which constrained both those captains to draw into their quarters. Nicolas applied himself all winter to reinforce his army, in which both the pope and king Alphonso assisted him; so that early in the spring both generals took the field, and Nicolas, being the stronger, had reduced the earl to extreme necessity, and had certainly overthrown him, had not the duke interrupted Nicolas's designs.

Philip sent to desire his immediate presence, for he had something of importance to confer with him;

which Nicolas, covetous to hear, abandoned a certain victory for an incertain pleasure; and leaving the command of the army to his son Francis, posts to Milan. This the earl having intelligence of, would not lose the opportunity of fighting in Nicolas's absence, and engaging near Monte Loro, routed Nicolas's forces, and took Francis prisoner. Nicolas, arrived at Milan, finding himself abused by Philip, and receiving intelligence of his son's being defeated and taken, died with grief in the year one thousand four hundred and forty five, and the sixty fourth of his age; leaving behind him two sons Francis and Jacob, who had less valour, and worse fortune than their father; so that these Braccian forces were almost quite worn out, and the Sforzan arms, still seconded by fortune, became more and more glorious.

The pope seeing Nicolas's forces defeated, and himself dead, having no sure reliance on the aid of Arragon, fought peace with the earl, and by the Florentines intermission concluded it; by which Osimo, Fabriano or Riconati towns of La Marca, became the pope's, and all the rest of that territory remained subject to the earl. Peace thus concluded in La Marca, all Italy had been at quiet, had not the Bolonesi disturbed its repose.

There were in Bologna two mighty families, the Caneschi and Bentivogli; of the last Annibal was the head, and of the first Battista. They had, to beget a greater confidence in each other, made several marriages; but in men, aspiring to the same

greatness, though alliances may be easily contracted, yet friendship is not. Bologna was in league with the Florentines and Venetians; which they had entered into by the mediation of Annibal Bentivogli, after his driving Francis Piccinino out of that city. Battista, knowing how much the duke desired the favour of the city, plotted with him to kill Annibal, and reduce the city under his obedience. And having concluded on the manner, Battista, with his followers, on the twenty fourth of June one thousand four hundred and forty five, assaults Annibal and kills him, and thereupon proclaims the duke throughout the town.

The Venetian and Florentine commissaries were in the city, who upon the first rumour retired to their houses; but seeing afterwards how the people, arming themselves, flocked in great numbers to the market place, to oppose the murderers, and revenge the death of Annibal, they took heart, and with those men they had about them, joined with the people, and, making head, charged the Caneschi, whom in a very short time they overthrew, killing some, and driving the rest out of the city. Battista not having an opportunity to fly, nor his enemies to kill him, hid himself in his house under a vessel made to keep corn in; and his enemies having made search for him all that day, knowing that he was not gone out of the city, so terrified his servants, that a boy of his, out of fear, shewed them where he was; whom, pulling out thence still in his armour, they immediately slew, and then hav-

ing dragged his body through the streets burnt it.

Thus the duke's victory proved sufficient to make Battista attempt this enterprize; but his succour came not time enough to maintain it, or save his life. Though the death of Battista, and flight of the Canneschi, had quieted these tumults, yet the Bolonesi remained in great confusion, there being none of the family of Bentivogli fit to govern, Annibal having left but one son, called John, not above six years of age; so that they grew fearful least some division, happening among the friends of the Bentivogli, might give opportunity to the Canneschi to return, to the ruin of the city and their party. But whilst they lay under those fears and jealousies, Francis, formerly earl of Poppi, being then in Bologna, gave advertisement to the prime men of the city, that if they were desirous to be governed by one of the blood of the Bentivogli, he could inform them where to find one; and therewithal acquainted them, how Hercules the cousin of Annibal happening, about twenty years since, to be at Poppi, had there an amour with a young woman of that castle, who was afterwards delivered of a son called Santi, which Hercules often affirmed to be his, nor could he indeed well deny it; for whoever looked on Hercules and the child, would find a very great likeness or resemblance.

The citizens gave credit to his report, and delayed not the sending ambassadors to Florence to

find out the young man, and to prevail with Cosmo and Neri that he might be sent to them. The reputed father of Santi was dead, and the youth lived under the care and tuition of an uncle of his, called Antony Cascese. Antony was rich, childless, and a friend of Neri's; wherefore as soon as the matter was divulged, Neri was of opinion that it was neither to be slighted, nor rashly accepted, and thought good to speak with Santi himself, in the presence of Cosmo and those sent from Bologna; and being all met, Santi was by the Bolonesi not only honoured, but almost adored: so much can the love of parties or factions prevail over the minds of men! for the present, nothing was concluded, save that Cosmo, taking the young man aside, told him, "None can in this case advise thee better
 " than myself, for thou art to make that choice
 " which thou findest thy own soul inclinable to;
 " and if thou be the son of Hercules Bentivoglio,
 " thou wilt dispose thyself to actions worthy that
 " house and family; but if thou be the son of Ag-
 " nolo Cascese, thou wilt content thyself to stay
 " in Florence, and follow his mean trade of dres-
 " sing wool."

These words moved the young man; and whereas before he had in a manner denied to accept the proposal, he now referred himself wholly to what Cosmo and Neri should determine; so that they, agreeing with the messengers of Bologna, furnished him with clothes, horses, and servants, and soon

after with an honourable company he was attended to Bologna; where the charge and government of Annibal's children, and of the city, was committed to him: wherein he behaved himself with so much prudence, that whereas his predecessors had all been slain by their enemies, he both lived in peace, and died in honour.

Philip, after the death of Nicolas Piccinino, and the peace in La Marca, being desirous of a general to command his armies, held private correspondence with Ciarpellone, one of the earl's principal captains, and came to an agreement with him: whereupon Ciarpellone asked the earl's leave to go to Milan to take possession of certain castles, which had by the duke in the late war been given him. But the earl having some suspicion of the contrivance, that he might not serve the duke to his prejudice, first stopped him, and soon after put him to death, giving out he had dealt falsely and fraudulently with him. At this the duke was exceeding angry; but the Florentines and Venetians very well pleased, fearing nothing more than a friendship and conjunction between the duke's and earl's forces. But the duke's resentment stirred up the war afresh in La Marca.

Gismond Malatesti, lord of Rimini, being son-in-law to the earl, hoped to have Pesaro assigned over to him; but the earl, having got possession of it, gave it to Alexander his brother: at which Gismond was enraged; and to encrease his fury, it happened, that Frederic of Montefeltro his profess

enemy, had, by the earl's favour and connivance, seized on the lordship of Urbin. These affronts made Gismond join with the duke, and solicit the pope and king to make a war upon the earl; who, to make Gismond taste the first fruits of the seed he had sown, by way of prevention falls first upon his territories: so that Romania and La Marca were filled with war and tumult; for the king, pope, and duke sent large aids to Gismond; and the Venetians and Florentines, if not with men, yet with money, abundantly supplied the earl.

Philip, mean while, thought not the war in Romania enough to afflict the earl, but designed to take from him Cremona, and Pontremoli; but the first was by the Venetians, and the last by the Florentines defended. So the war was again revived in Lombardy, in which, after some skirmishes happening in the country of Cremona, Francis Piccinino, general for the duke, was at Casal, by Michaelotto and the Venetian forces, defeated. Which victory put the Venetians in hopes of becoming lords of the duke's estates, and encouraged them to send one of their commissaries to invade Giradadda, who took the whole country, except Cremona, and thence passing the Adda, made his incursions as far as Milan. Whereupon the duke had recourse to Alphonso, craving his assistance, and setting forth the danger his kingdom would be exposed to if the Venetians were lords of Lombardy. Alphonso promised to send him aid, which could

hardly, without the earl's consent, have passage. Upon which Philip was forced to supplicate the earl, that he would not utterly desert his father-in-law now grown blind and aged. The earl thought himself injured by the duke, for having been the mover of this war; but on the other side he affected not the greatness of the Venetians, and began himself to want money, which the league supplied but sparingly: for the Florentines were now freed from their fears of the duke, which had begot their esteem of the earl; and the Venetians sought his destruction, believing the dominion of Lombardy could not be snatched from them by any one but him. And yet, whilst Philip solicited him to accept of his pay, and offered him the supreme command of all his forces, on condition he would desert the Venetians, and restore La Marca to the pope, they sent likewise their ambassadors, promising him Milan if they took it, and to be perpetual general of their armies, provided he prosecuted the war in La Marca, and prevented Alphonso's forces from coming to relieve Lombardy.

The Venetian promises were great, and their merits greater, having first begun this war to secure Cremona for the earl; and on the other side, the duke's injuries were fresh, and his promises faithless and not to be relied on. However the earl was doubtful what choice to make. On the one side, his obligation to the league, his word past, with the late deservings and promises of future advantages, were strong motives; and on the other side,

the prayers of his father-in-law, but principally the poison he feared lay hid under the Venetians extravagant promises, withheld him: for he judged, that both in relation to their promises, and his own estates, he should, whenever they were victors, lye at their discretion; which no prudent prince ought to expose himself to, unless in pure necessity.

These difficulties of coming to a resolve were by the ambition of the Venetians removed; who, put in hopes to surprize Cremona, by some intelligence they had in that city, under other pretences made their army approach it; but the plot was discovered by the earl's garrison, and their design frustrated: so, though they got not Cremona, they lost the earl, who, laying aside all respects, joined now with the duke.

Pope Eugenius was now dead, and Nicolas the fifth succeeded in the papacy. The earl lay with all his army at Cotignuola, ready to march into Lombardy, when intelligence was brought him that Philip was dead, which happened on the last of August fourteen hundred and fifty seven. This news extremely perplexed the earl; he suspected his own people were discontented, not having had their full pay; he was fearful of the Venetians, now in arms against him, and whom he had so lately made enemies, by deserting them and joining with the duke; he was doubtful of Alphonso his perpetual enemy, and had no great hopes in the pope or Florentines; in these, because

they were in league with the Venetians; and in the other, because he was possessor of the church lands. Yet he resolved to out-face fortune, and govern himself and his affairs according as things fell out; for many times by action those councils are discovered, which idleness conceals. Some hopes he had in believing, that if the Milanese would defend themselves from the ambition of the Venetians, they could fly to no shelter but his: wherewith taking heart he marches into the territories of Bologna, from thence passing Modena and Reggio, and sitting down on the Lenza, sends to Milan to offer his service. The Milanese, after the duke's death, would, some live free, and others under a prince. Those who desired a prince were partly for the earl, and partly for king Alphonso: wherefore those who made choice of liberty, being more united, prevailed against the other, and established such a common-wealth as pleased them; but to which many cities of the dutchy refused obedience; thinking they might enjoy their liberty as well as Milan, or not being able to aspire to that, yet they would not be lorded over by the Milanese. On which, Lodi and Piacenza submitted to the Venetians, Pavia and Parma would live free. The earl, hearing of these confusions, went to Cremona; whither came his ambassadors with others from the Milanese, bringing this conclusion, that he should be general of Milan upon the same terms lately made with duke Philip; with this addition, that Brescia should be the earl's, till he could take

Verona; which done, that to be his, and Brescia to be restored.

Before the duke's death, pope Nicolas, at his exaltation to the papacy, had endeavoured to make peace among all Italian princes; whereupon he prevailed with those ambassadors sent him by the Florentines at his creation, to request that a diet might be held at Ferrara, in order to the treating either a long truce or a firm peace: to which end there assembled in that city the pope's legate, the duke's, the Florentine and Venetian ambassadors; but those of king Alphonso came not. He was then at Tivoli with a great power of horse and foot, and from thence countenanced the duke, designing as it is thought, having gained the earl to their side, openly to assault the Florentines and Venetians; and whilst he delayed time, the earl with his forces to stay in Lombardy, and the treaty of peace to proceed; to which the king sent not, affirming he would ratify whatever the duke assented to. The peace was many days debated, and after many disputes concluded, either to be perpetual, or a truce for five years, which of the two best pleased the duke. But the duke's ambassadors being sent to Milan, to understand his pleasure, found him dead. The Milanese, notwithstanding his death, would have stood to the agreement; but the Venetians would not, having now greater hopes than ever, to become lords of that state, especially seeing, so soon after his death, Lodi and Piacenza submit to them; assuring themselves they should in a short time, ei-

ther by force or consent, despoil Milan of all its estates, and afterwards so oppress the city itself, that it should be constrained to surrender before any relief could come: and they more firmly persuaded themselves to this, seeing the Florentines intangled in a war with king Alphonso.

That king was now at Tivoli, and designing to pursue his expedition against Tuscany, as he had concluded with duke Philip, imagining the war raised in Lombardy gave him time and opportunity, he was desirous to get footing in the Florentine estates, before he declared open war; and to that end plotted the surprisal of the castle of Cennima, in the upper vale of Arno; which by conspiracy with some within he won. The Florentines startled at this unexpected accident, seeing the king resolved to prosecute them, hired soldiers, created the council of ten, and according to their custom prepared for war. The king was already marched into the territories of Siena, and used all his endeavours to gain the favour of that city; but the Sanesi, continuing firm in their friendship to the Florentines, would not admit him into Siena, nor any other of their towns. True it is, they furnished him with some provisions, but for that, their weakness and his power pleaded their excuse. The king thought it not convenient to make his inroads by the vale of Arno, as he had at first designed, both because Cennima was again recovered, also because the Florentines were already pretty well furnished with men; wherefore he advances to-

wards Volterra, and took several castles in the Volterran; thence turning into the territory of Pisa, by the countenance of Anigo and Fatio, counts of Ghirardesca, he takes some castles, and assaults Campelia; but finding it defended both by the Florentines, and the hard winter, fails in the attempt: wherefore, leaving garrisons in the towns he had taken, both to defend them, and make incursions into the country with the rest of his army, he returns to his quarters in the country of Siena.

The Florentines, having this advantage of the season, with all diligence provided men, and chose Frederic lord of Urban, and Gismond Malatesti, for their commanders; between whom, though some difference happened, yet by the prudence of Neri di Gino, and Bernadetto Medici, it was in such a measure accommodated; and notwithstanding the cold was still very fierce, they drew forth the army, and regained all the towns lost in the country of Pisa and Pomeranci in the Volterran, and so streightened the king's forces that made their inroads along the sea coast, that they were scarce able to defend their garrisons. But spring coming on, the commissaries advanced with all their forces, consisting of five thousand horse, and two thousand foot, to Spedaletto; and the king draws his army, consisting of fifteen thousand, within three miles of Campiglia; and whilst they thought he would besiege that town, turns off and sits down before Piombino, which he hoped easily to carry, because it was very ill provided, and withal believing the

acquisition would prove of great advantage to him, and prejudice to the Florentines; because from thence he might consume the Florentines with a tedious war, and having his own provisions by sea, spoil the whole country of Pisa.

This siege sorely afflicted the Florentines; yet advising what was best to be done, they supposed that if their army could maintain its station among the thickets of Campiglia, the king would be forced to depart either with loss or disgrace. Wherefore they armed four gallies, which they had at Leghorn, and by them sent three hundred foot into Piombino, encamping themselves at Caldacce, a post where they must with difficulty be assailed; for to lye among the Firzes in the plain they conceived it dangerous. The Florentine camp was victualled from the towns adjacent, which being but few and thinly inhabited, made provision scarce: so that the army suffered extreme want, but especially of wine; for none being made there, and no possibility of having it elsewhere, that defect could not be supplied. But the king, though he was streightened by the Florentines, had abundance of all sorts of provision, even from straw upwards, which was brought him by sea. Wherefore the Florentines grew desirous to make trial, if they likewise could relieve their camp by sea, and loaded their gallies with provision; but in the voyage they were met by seven of the king's gallies, and two of them were taken, and the other two put to flight.

This defeat made the Florentine army lose all hopes of refreshment; whereupon two hundred pioneers, or more, for want, of wine especially, fled into the king's camp, and the rest murmured, declaring, they could not, nor would not, stay in those hot places where they had neither wine nor wholesome water. Whereupon the commissaries resolved to remove, and prepared themselves for the recovery of several castles which were yet in the king's hands: who on the other side, though he stood in no want of provision, and was superior in number, yet his troops began to decay; for his camp was infected with divers diseases, occasioned by vapours arising from the sea, of which many died, and most were infirm. Whereupon a treaty was set on foot, whereby the king demanded fifty thousand florins, and Piombino to be left at his discretion; which being debated at Florence, many that were desirous of peace accepted, affirming, they knew not how any could hope they should overcome in a war that required such vast expence to maintain it. But Neri Capponi going to Florence, with such reasons dissuaded them, that the whole city agreed not to accept those conditions, but received the lord of Piombino into their pay and protection, promising in war and peace to maintain and defend him, provided he would not be wanting to himself, but as hitherto he had done defend his city.

The king having advice of this resolution, and perceiving that by reason of the sickness in his

camp, he could not gain the town, raised the siege as if he had been defeated, and leaving two thousand dead upon the place, with the rest of his infirm army retreated into the country of Siena, and thence to the kingdom, desperately enraged against the Florentines, and threatening the next spring a new invasion.

During this confusion of affairs in Tuscany, earl Francis being made general for the Milanese in Lombardy, first of all engages Francis Piccinino's friendship, that either he might favour his designs, or at least be more wary of obstructing them; and then drawing his army into the field, those of Pavia supposing themselves unable to resist his forces, and resolving not to submit to the Milanese, offered him their town, upon condition he should not deliver them up to Milan. The earl was very desirous to have the possession of that city, believing it would be a brave beginning, and an excellent colour for other designs. Nor did shame, nor breach of faith, restrain him; for great men think loss a shame, and not conquest, though by deceit. Yet he was afraid by taking it he should so anger the Milanese, that they would give up their right to the Venetians; and if he took it not, he was fearful of the duke of Savoy, to whom many citizens proposed a surrender. One way or the other he saw himself deprived of the empire of Lombardy: yet presuming there would be less danger in the taking it, than leaving it to another, he resolved to accept it, persuading himself he might pacify the Milanese; to whom he sent

word, how many dangers he had incurred by not accepting Pavia, which those citizens would otherwise have surrendered, either to the Venetians or the duke of Savoy, in either of which cases their dominion there was lost; and that it was much better for them to have him their neighbour and friend, than to have a powerful neighbour, as either of the other were, and an enemy.

On the other hand, the Milanese were much troubled at it, imagining they had made a discovery of the earl's ambition, and the ends he drove at; but they thought it best not to discover their thoughts, not knowing whither, if they once cast off the earl, to turn themselves, unless to the Venetians, whose pride and heavy conditions they detested: wherefore they resolved not to fall at variance with the earl, but make use of him to oppose the present storms, hoping, they once blown over, to free themselves likewise from him: for at this time they were not only assailed by the Venetians, but the Genoese and the duke of Savoy, in the name and right of Charles of Orleans, son to a sister of Philip. But that war was with ease by the earl suppressed; and then they had no enemies left but the Venetians, who with a mighty army sought to make themselves master of that state, and were possessed of Lodi and Piacenza; which last the earl laid siege to, and with great labour took, and sacked. After which, for winter was drawing on, he brought his army into quarters, and went himself

to Cremona, where all that season he reposed himself with his wife.

But spring approaching, the Venetian and Milanese armies took the field; the Milanese only desired to regain Lodi, and then make peace with the Venetians; for both the charges of the war increasing upon them, and withal their jealousies of their general, whose fidelity they mistrusted, they grew infinitely desirous of peace, that they might enjoy some repose, and secure themselves against the earl. They therefore resolved their army should make an attempt upon Caravaggio, hoping whenever that castle were regained from the enemy, Lodi would surrender. The earl obeyed the Milanese, though he had more mind to pass the Adda, and fall into the country of Brescia. Having therefore laid siege to Caravaggio, he fortified himself with trenches and bulwarks, that, if the Venetians attempted to raise the siege, they should do it with disadvantage.

On the other side, the Venetians came with their army under Michaelotto within two bowshot of the enemy, where they lay several days and many skirmishes happened. However, the earl made his approaches to the castle, and reduced it to such a condition that it could not longer hold out; which much afflicted the Venetians, believing with the loss of it they should lose Lodi. Wherefore calling a council of war, there were many debates how to relieve it; but none seemed probable, unless they could force the enemies works, which must be done

with great disadvantage. However, they thought that castle of such concern, that the senate of Venice, naturally fearful, and dreading any thing they behold doubtful and dangerous, chose to run the hazard of all, rather than with the loss of that castle lose their present design. They therefore determined, in the best manner they could, to storm the earl's camp, and getting in order one morning very early, fell on in that part they had observed to be weakest guarded; so that upon the first charge, as happens in all unexpected assaults, Sforza's whole army was in confusion. But the earl soon repaired that disorder; so that after many attempts made by the enemy to force the trenches, they were not only repulsed, but so totally routed and discomfited, that of twelve thousand horse, which were in the army, not above a thousand saved themselves; all their ammunition and carriages became a prey to the enemies; nor ever before or since, did the Venetians receive a greater or more dreadful blow.

Among the prey and prisoners was found a Venetian providitor very sad and melancholy, who before the fight, and in the carrying on the war, had been used to speak very disgracefully of the earl, calling him bastard and base fellow: so that finding himself now a prisoner, and being conscious of his fault, fearing to be rewarded according to his deserts; being brought before the earl, quaking and trembling, according to the nature of proud and base-minded men, who are insolent in prosperity

and low and mean in adversity; casting himself on his knees with tears in his eyes, humbly craved pardon for the injuries he had done him; whom the earl taking by the hand, and raising him up, desired him to be of good comfort, and hope the best, and then told him, “ That he wondered a man
 “ of that prudence and gravity he would be
 “ thought, should so forget himself, as to talk so
 “ vilely of those that had not deserved it: for as to
 “ those matters wherewith he had scandalized him,
 “ he knew not what had been done between Sforza
 “ his father, and the lady Lucia his mother, because he neither was nor could be present; but
 “ as to his own doings, he was sensible he had governed himself so, that no man could justly re-
 “ prove him; of which both himself and the whole
 “ senate could bear sufficient testimony; and therefore exhorted him for the future, to be more
 “ modest in his expressions, and more cautious in
 “ his proceedings.”

After this victory, the earl with his triumphant army marched into the territory of Brescia; all which he possessed himself off, and then pitched his camp within two miles of the city. On the other side, the Venetians having received this defeat, imagining, as it happened, that Brescia would be the next thing stricken at, had taken the best care, and made the best provision for it they could; and then with all diligence levied forces, and rallied the remnants of their broken army, and by virtue of the league sent to demand aid from the Florentines,

who being released from the war by king Alphonso, sent to their assistance one thousand foot, and two thousand horse. With this addition of forces the Venetians were in a condition to begin to think of peace.

It hath been a long time fatal to the Venetian republic to lose in war, and afterwards by treaty to have it restored double; and the Venetians now well knew how jealous the Milanese were of the earl, and how the earl desired not to be earl but lord of Milan; so that it was in their power to make peace with either, the one desiring it out of ambition, and the other out of fear. They chose to make it with the earl, and offer him their assistance to conquer the other; persuading themselves, that the Milanese, seeing themselves deceived in the earl, would in indignation rather submit themselves to any than to him; and so reducing them into a condition that they could neither defend themselves nor trust the earl, they would be forced, not knowing which way to turn themselves, to fall into their lap.

Having thus deliberated, they founded the earl's inclination, and found him very ready to embrace peace, being desirous the victory gained at Caravaggio should be his and not the Milanese: wherefore an agreement was concluded, by which the Venetians were obliged to pay the earl, till such time as he had conquered Milan, thirteen thousand florins a month; and moreover, during that war, to assist

him with four thousand horse, and two thousand foot: and the earl on the other part obliged himself to restore to the Venetians all the towns, prisoners, or whatever else had been taken in that war, and content himself with those lands duke Philip at his death possessed.

As soon as this agreement was known at Milan, it more afflicted that whole city than the victory at Caravaggio had rejoiced them: the magistrates vented their griefs to one another in sad complaints; the common people railed, and the women and children wept, and all with one voice called him disloyal and traitor: and though they could not believe either prayers or promises could withdraw him from his ingrateful design, yet they sent ambassadors to him, to see with what face, and what words, he would justify his wickedness; who being come before the earl, one of them spoke in this manner.

“ Those, who are earnest to obtain any
 “ thing from another, do usually with prayers,
 “ promises, or threats invade him, so that either
 “ moved by compassion, advantage or fear, he may
 “ condescend to their desires; but in cruel and a-
 “ varicious minds, and withal opinionative of their
 “ own power, all these ways are to no purpose,
 “ and in vain, men strive either to humble them
 “ with prayers, to gain them with rewards, or
 “ terrify them with threatenings. Wherefore we
 “ being made sensible, though too late, of your
 “ cruelty, ambition and pride, are not come hi-

“ ther to beg any thing from you, nor have any
 “ hopes to obtain it if we should, but to put you
 “ in mind of the obligations you owe to the peo-
 “ ple of Milan, and to declare with how much
 “ ingratitude you have discharged them, that in
 “ the midst of so many miseries we may have at
 “ least the satisfaction of reproaching you. You
 “ cannot but well remember what conditions you
 “ made after duke Philip’s death : you then were
 “ enemy to the king and pope, had deserted the
 “ Venetians and Florentines, who either out of
 “ just and fresh resentments, or because they had
 “ no more need of you, were upon the point of
 “ declaring against you. You were yourself grown
 “ weary of the war with the church, your forces
 “ few, your friends none, and your treasure quite
 “ expended, and you in danger of losing your ef-
 “ tates, and your ancient reputation together ; all
 “ which had soon befallen you, had it not been
 “ for our simplicity ; for we were the only power
 “ that sheltered you, moved out of the reverence
 “ we bore to the happy memory of our duke,
 “ with whom you having contracted a former al-
 “ liance and new friendship, we believed your
 “ love might descend from him to us, and that if to
 “ his obligations we joined ours, that bond would
 “ not only be firm, but inseparable ; and therefore
 “ to the former articles were added either Brescia
 “ or Verona ; what could we give or promise you
 “ more ? or, what could you, I do not say of us,
 “ but in those times of any one, either have or in-

“ deed desire? you received then from us unhop-
 “ ed for kindness, and we have now in return from
 “ you unexpected malice. Nor have you ceased
 “ from that very hour, to declare the perverseness
 “ of your intentions; for no sooner were you ge-
 “ neral of our forces, but contrary to all justice
 “ you received Pavia, which might have warned
 “ us what the end of your friendship would prove;
 “ yet we past by that injury, supposing the large-
 “ ness of that conquest might have satisfied your
 “ ambition; but alas! those who desire all will
 “ never be satisfied with part. You then promis-
 “ ed we should enjoy what you afterwards gained;
 “ because you imagined what was given by parcels,
 “ might be snatched again at once, as hath hap-
 “ pened since the victory at Caravaggio, which,
 “ being gained with our blood and money, hath
 “ since been pursued to our destruction.

“ O unhappy those cities! who are exposed to
 “ defend their liberty against all oppressors; but
 “ more unhappy those who are necessitated to trust
 “ the defence of it to mercenary and disloyal arms,
 “ like yours: let posterity therefore be warned by
 “ our example; though we have not taken warn-
 “ ing from that of Thebes, and Philip of Macedon,
 “ who, after having conquered their adversary, first
 “ became their enemy, and then their prince.
 “ However, we can be accused of no other fault,
 “ but putting too much confidence in him whom
 “ we should not at all have trusted; for your past
 “ life, the ambition of your mind, content with

“ no estate or degree, should have deterred us.
“ What hopes could we have in him who betrayed
“ a lord of Lucca, fleeced the Florentines and Venetians, slighted the duke, abused the king, and
“ what is above all, with such violences and injuries persecuted God and his church? why
“ should we think all those states and princes had less power over Francis Sforza than the Milanese,
“ or that he, who had so often violated his faith with others, would keep it with us. Yet our
“ want of prudence, for which we are to be blamed, is no excuse for your perfidiousness, nor
“ can it purge that infamy our just complaints shall spread through the world, nor release you
“ from the cheeks of your own conscience; for
“ when with those arms prepared for our defence you came to smite and injure us, you cannot but
“ inwardly condemn yourself to the punishment appointed for parricides. And though ambition
“ should blind you, the whole world, witness to
“ your treachery, will open your eyes, God himself
“ will open them, if treasons, perjury, and violated faith displease him; unless, as hitherto for
“ some occult end he has been, he still continue a
“ favourer of malignant men. Promise not then to
“ yourself victory which the just hand of God will
“ deny you; and know, we shall till death defend
“ our liberty, and when we can no longer do it,
“ submit it rather to any other prince than you:
“ or if our sins be so great, that we must, in
“ spite of us, fall into your hands, yet be assured,

“ that dominion you enter into by fraud and deceit, will end in you or in your children with loss and ignominy.”

Though the earl was touched to the quick with what the Milanese had said, yet without any visible alteration either in his words or gesture he answered: “ That he was content to attribute to their anger and passion all the injuries of their impertinent speeches, to every particular of which he could give an answer, were he before any that could judge of their differences, that it might appear he had not injured the Milanese; but only taken care they should not injure him; for they could not but be sensible of their practices after the victory at Caravaggio, when, instead of rewarding him with Brescia or Verona, they sought a peace with the Venetians, that on him alone all the burden of the hate might lye, whilst they enjoyed the fruits of the victory, the sweetness of peace, and all the advantages that could be extracted from the war. Wherefore they had no reason to complain if he had now made that agreement they had at first designed to do, which, if he had but a little delayed, he might with more justice have reproached them with that ingratitude wherewith they now scandalize him; which, whether true or no, that God, whom they invoke for their revenger, will by the conclusion of the war determine, by which it would appear which had acted with most honesty, and fought with most justice.”

The ambassadors gone, the earl gave order to assault the Milanese, and they prepared for their defence; and with Francis and Jacob Piccinino, whom out of the ancient enmity between the Bracchi and Sforzi, had continued faithful to the Milanese, thought so long at least to defend their liberty, till they made a breach between the earl and the Venetians, whom they knew to be faithless and inconstant friends. On the other side, the earl who knew this well enough, thought it a wise course, when faith was too weak a cord to hold them, to strengthen it with rewards; and therefore in distributing the gains of the war, he was content the Venetians should, if they took it, have Crema, and he with the remaining forces would assault the rest of that state.

This league made the Venetians continue firm, till the duke had become master of all the Milanese dominion, and so streightened the city, that, despairing of any other aid, they sent ambassadors to Venice, to beg their compassion, and that they would be pleased, according to the wont of their commonwealth, to be favourers of liberty, and not of a tyrant, who if once he became lord of their city, they could not bridle at pleasure: for it was in vain to think, he would be kept to the conditions agreed to, or confined to the antient bounds of that dominion. The Venetians had not yet mastered Crema, and being willing, before they changed countenance, to become lords of that town, they publicly answered them, that they

could not, because of their agreement with the earl, assist them; but privately they encouraged them to put their fellow citizens in firm hopes of their friendship.

The earl with his forces was already got so near Milan, that he plundered the suburbs, when the Venetians, having taken Crema, thought fit no longer to defer making up matters with the Milanese, with whom they entered into articles: the first of which was, that they would fully defend their liberty; this agreement made, they commanded their forces which served under the earl, to withdraw from his camp to their own, and at the same time signified to the earl, the peace they had made; giving him twenty days, if he pleased, to accept it. The earl did not much wonder at these proceedings of the Venetians, for he had long before foreseen it, and expected every day when it should happen; yet now it was befallen, he could not forbear fretting at it, and feeling the same passion within himself, as the Milanese had done when he abandoned them; he took two days to return an answer to the ambassadors, who brought him the signification of the peace. In which time he determined to keep a treaty on foot, and yet follow his own designs; wherefore he publicly declared he would accept the peace, and sent ambassadors with full commission to ratify it; but gave them private instructions not to do it, but only with cavils and delays gain time; and to confirm the Venetians in a belief that he meant faith-

fully, he makes truce for a month with the Milanese, and drawing off his forces from the city, quartered them in the most convenient towns he had in his possession about it.

By this means he procured victory to himself, and ruined the Milanese: for the Venetians, trusting to the peace, made slow provision for war; and the Milanese seeing a truce granted, the enemy withdrawn, and the Venetians their friends, flattered themselves that all was well, and that the earl had given over his enterprize. Which easy belief did them double prejudice; for in the first place they neglected to prepare for their own defence, and then though the country lay open to the enemy, it being now seed time, they sowed great quantities of grain, whereby the earl might the easier furnish them. All these things hurtful to the enemy proved helps to the earl, who besides gained so much time to breathe and recruit his army.

In all this war of Lombardy, the Florentines had declared themselves on neither party; neither had they showed any favour to the earl, either when he defended the Milanese, or since; for indeed the earl, not standing in need of it, had never pressed it: only after the rout of Caravaggio, being obliged to it by the league, they had sent assistance to the Venetians. But now earl Francis being left to himself, having no other recourse, was constrained instantly to urge the Florentines to assist him; which he did not only publicly to the state, but

privately to his friends, and especially to Cosmo de Medici, with whom he had always preserved an inviolable friendship, and who in all his undertakings had faithfully counselled, and largely supplied him: nor did Cosmo forsake him in his necessity, but as a private person plentifully contributed to his relief, and encouraged him to proceed, withal moving the city publicly to assist him. But herein he found some difficulty.

Neri de Gino Capponi was a man very powerful in Florence, and he was of opinion, “ It was not
 “ for the interest of the city that the earl should
 “ take Milan, judging it rather for the safety of
 “ Italy that the peace were ratified than the war
 “ prosecuted: for in the first place, he was doubtful
 “ left the Milanese out of spight to the duke
 “ should surrender to the Venetians, which would
 “ prove ruinous to all; and again, should the earl
 “ become master of Milan, he thought so mighty
 “ an army, and so great a dominion joined to it,
 “ would render him too formidable; and if he
 “ were almost insupportable being but earl, if once
 “ duke, there would be no enduring him. Wherefore
 “ he thought it better for the commonwealth
 “ of Florence, and all Italy, that the earl should
 “ still preserve his reputation in arms, and Lombardy
 “ be divided into two commonwealths, who
 “ would never join to offend others, and each by
 “ themselves could not do it: to bring which to
 “ pass he saw no way, but, by not relieving the

“ earl, and maintaining their old league with the
“ Venetians.”

But Cosmo's friends approved not these reasons, which they thought Neri moved, not because indeed he thought it good for the commonwealth, but because he would not have the earl, so great a friend of Cosmo's, become duke, whereby he thought Cosmo would grow too powerful. Cosmo on the other side by reason demonstrated, “ That the assisting the earl was for the good of
“ Italy and that commonwealth ; for it was an opinion favouring of little wisdom, to think the
“ Milanese could ever preserve their liberty ; for
“ both the quality of the citizens, their manner of
“ living, and the ancient factions in that city, were
“ all contradictory to civil government ; so that of
“ necessity the earl must become duke, or the Venetians lords of it ; and no man could be so
“ much a fool as to start a doubt, whether it were
“ better to have the neighbourhood of a potent
“ friend, or of a very powerful enemy ? nor was
“ it, as he thought, to be doubted that the Milanese, though they had war with the earl, would
“ ever submit to the Venetians ; for the earl had a
“ party in Milan, but they none ; so that whether
“ they despaired of longer defending their liberty,
“ they would rather submit to the earl than the
“ Venetians.

This diversity of opinion held the city in a long suspense, but at last they determined to send am-

bassadors to treat with the earl, with instructions, that if they found him strong, and likely to overcome, they should clap up an agreement with him, but if not, then use cavils and delays. These ambassadors were in their way as far as Reggio, when they heard the earl was already become lord of Milan; for as soon as the truce was expired, he had again drawn his forces before that city, with hopes, in spite of the Venetians, shortly to possess it, for they could no way relieve it but by the way of the Adda, which he could easily block up; and he did not at all fear, since it was winter, that the Venetians would encamp on the banks of that river; and before spring he hoped to gain the victory, especially since Francis Piccinino was dead, and the Milanese had no other captain but his brother Jacob. The Venetians had sent their ambassadors to Milan, encouraging those citizens to defend themselves, and promising great and speedy succour. There happened during winter divers light skirmishes between the earl and Venetians, and spring coming on, the Venetians with their whole army, under the command of Pandolpho Malatesta, sat down on the banks of the Adda, where they began to consult, whether to relieve Milan they should assail the earl, and try the fortune of a battle. Pandolpho their general thought this too hazardous an experiment, knowing the valour both of the earl and his army, believing they might easily vanquish him without fighting, the earl being in great distress for want of corn

and straw; he therefore advised they should keep that post, so putting the Milanese in hopes, least in despair they should surrender to the earl.

This course was approved by the Venetians, as well because they thought it secure, as because they were in hopes, by holding the Milanese in necessity, they should constrain them to submit to their dominion, persuading themselves, they would never yield to the earl, considering the injuries done them; so that the Milanese were reduced to extreme misery, and that city naturally abounding with poor, they died in the very streets with hunger; which caused such uproars and complaints in divers parts of the city, that the magistrates were forced to use their utmost endeavours to prevent a general tumult.

The multitude are long before they are disposed to mischief, but once disposed, every little accident moves them; so now two persons, of no considerable quality, discoursing together at the new gate, of the calamity of the city, and their own miseries, and what means there were yet for safety; others began to gather about them, till at last they grew to be a great number; whereupon a rumour was spread about the city, that those that were about the new gate were in arms against the magistrates. Upon which all the multitude, who waited but such an occasion, took arms, and made Jasper of Vicomercato their leader, and going to the palace where the magistrates were assembled, they

fell on with such fury, that all those that could not fly were slain; amongst whom was Leonard Vinetto the Venetian ambassador, whom, as an occasioner of their famine, and rejoicer at their misery, they tore in pieces; and thus become, as it were, princes of the city, they proposed among themselves, what was best to be done to release themselves from these afflictions, and procure their quiet and repose. Every man was of opinion, since they could no longer maintain their liberty, that it was their best course to shelter themselves under the protection of some prince able to defend them: some were for king Alphonso, others for the duke of Savoy, and others would have the king of France for their lord; not the least mention was made of the earl, so prevalent was their anger against him. But when they could not agree upon any of the others, Jasper of Vicomercato was the first that named him, affirming, "That if they designed to free themselves from the war they groaned under, there was no other way but choosing him; for the people of Milan stood in need of a present and certain peace, and could never be redressed by the tedious hopes of future relief." Then with the best of his invention, "he excused the earl's actions, accused the Venetians, and all the princes of Italy, who would not, either out of ambition or avarice, permit them to live free; and since they must give away their liberty, they should give it to one who could and would defend them, that at least with their servitude they might purchase

“ peace, and not a more dangerous and hazardous
“ war.”

He was with wonderful attention listened to by all, and no sooner had done speaking, but they unanimously cried out, that the earl should be called in, making Jasper ambassador to that purpose, who, by command of the people, went to attend the earl with this pleasant and joyful news; which the earl gladly accepted, and entered into Milan, as prince, on the twenty sixth of February fourteen hundred and fifty, and was with wonderful joy received by those who not long before had defamed him with such spight and hatred.

This news arriving at Florence, orders were dispatched to their ambassadors, who were on their way, not to treat an agreement with the earl, but to congratulate the duke for his victory. These ambassadors were, by the duke, very honourably received, for he very well knew that, against the power of the Venetians, he could not find in Italy more faithful nor braver friends than the Florentines, who being quit of their fears of the family of the Visconti, they believed must now be forced to engage against the powers of Arragon, and Venice: for the kings of Naples, being of the house of Arragon, were their enemies, because of the friendship which they knew the Florentine people had always kept with the house of France; and the Venetians sensible that the fear, they before stood in of the Visconti, was now turned over to them, remembering with what earnestness they pursued

the Visconti, and fearing the same persecutions, sought their ruin. This facilitated the new duke in agreeing with the Florentines, and was likewise the occasion that the Venetians and king Alphonso entered into a league against their common enemies, and obliged themselves, at the same time, to begin the war, and that the king should assail the Florentines, and the Venetians the duke, who, scarce settled in his government, they thought not able, either with his own force, or any assistance he could have from others, to maintain the war.

But because the league between the Venetians and Florentines was still in force, and the king, after the war at Piombino, had likewise made peace with them, they judged it not convenient to break the peace, without some pretence to justify the war; and therefore they both sent ambassadors to Florence, who, on behalf of their masters, declared to the Florentines, that they had entered into that league, not to offend others, but to defend themselves. The Venetians further complained, that the Florentines had given passage to Alexander, the duke's brother, to march by the way of Lunigiana with his forces into Lombardy; and had moreover been the authors and advisers of the agreement between the duke and the marquis of Mantua; all which things they affirmed to be prejudicial to their state, and contrary to the friendship they had contracted together; wherefore they could not but lovingly put them in mind, " That he, " who offends wrongfully, gives occasion to others

“ to offend with reason ; and he who breaks the
“ peace must look for war”

The senate appointed Cosmo to return them an answer to this embassy, who, in a long and prudent oration, made rehearsal of all the benefits which the republic of Venice had received from his city ; setting forth, “ How great a dominion they
“ had gained by the Florentine money, arms, and
“ counsels ;” and declaring, “ As the Florentines
“ had been the occasion of the friendship between
“ them, they would never be the cause of any
“ breach ; but as they had ever been the lovers of
“ peace, so they applauded the new league they
“ had entered into, provided it was made for peace
“ and not for war. It is true, they could not but
“ wonder at the complaints, seeing so mighty a
“ republic make so great an account of things so
“ light and vain, which, had they been indeed
“ worthy of consideration, they would have all
“ men know, that their country should be free and
“ open to any ; and that the duke was of that
“ quality, that to contract a peace with Mantua he
“ needed not their favour or advice : wherefore he
“ doubted there was some other poison hid under
“ these complaints ; which, if it were so, they
“ should easily make it appear, that as the Floren-
“ tine friendship could administer advantage, so
“ their enmity could bring damage and annoy-
“ ance.”

The matter was passed over lightly for the present, and the ambassadors seemed to go away satis-

sed. But yet the new league, and the measures held by the Venetians and the king, made both the Florentines and the duke rather fear a new war, than hope a firm peace: wherefore the Florentines entered into a stricter league with the duke, and in the mean time the Venetians discovered their ill intentions; for they made a league with Siena, and banished all the Florentines, and their subjects, from their city and dominions: and soon after Alphonso did the like, without any respect to the league made the year before, or without any just, or, so much as pretended, occasion. The Venetians had a great desire to gain Bologna, and having gathered together all the exiles of that city, with a good additional force, they conveyed them into Bologna by the common-sewers. Nor was their entrance known till themselves gave the alarm; whereat Santi Bentivoglio, starting from his sleep, was told the whole city was possessed by the rebels; and though many advised him by flight to save his life, since he could not by staying save the state, yet he would out-brave fortune, and arming himself, encouraged his people, and making head with some of his friends, charged a party of his enemies, and routing them, slew most, and drove the rest out of the city; whereupon all men adjudged him to be indeed of the blood of the Bentivoglii.

These actions and open attempts made the Florentines firmly believe a war would ensue: wherefore they applied themselves to their usual course

of defence, and created the council of ten, entertained new officers, sent ambassadors to Rome, Naples, Venice, Milan, and Siena, to demand aid of their friends, clear their own doubts and suspicions of those that were neutral, and discover the councils of their enemies. From the pope they gained nothing, but general assurances of his good inclinations, and exhortations to peace: from the king vain excuses, for his having dismissed the Florentines, offering to give safe conduct to whoever desired it; and though he contrived all he could to conceal the councils of the intended war, yet the ambassadors discovered his evil intentions, and detected many preparations of his, designed to damage the common-wealth. With the duke, by various new ties and obligations, they fortified their league, and by his means contracted amity with the Genoese, and their antient differences of reprisals, and many other quarrels they composed. Notwithstanding that, the Venetians, all they could, obstructed those compositions, and forbore not soliciting the emperor of Constantinople to forbid all Florentines, trading in his country: with so much rancour and malice they began this war, and so powerful in them was the desire of rule, that without any sense of gratitude, they sought the destruction of those who had raised them to their greatness! but the emperor gave no ear to them. The Florentine ambassadors were by the senate of Venice forbid entrance into their estates, alleging that without the king's participation, having con-

tracted so close an alliance with him, they could not receive them. The Sanesi courteously received their ambassadors, fearful of being surprized before the league could rescue them, and they chose rather to temporize, than incense those arms they could not resist.

The Venetians and king had designed, as hath been since conjectured, to have sent ambassadors to Florence to justify the war; but since the Venetian would not be admitted into the Florentine territories, and the king's would not perform that office alone, that embassy was left imperfect; but by this the Venetians knew, that the Florentines now as much undervalued them, as they had done Florence some months before.

In the height of these fears Frederic the third, emperor, came into Italy, to his coronation, and, on the thirtieth of January fourteen hundred and fifty one, entered into Florence with fourteen hundred horse, and was by that senate honourably received. He stayed in that city till the sixth of February, and then continued on his journey to Rome, where he was solemnly crowned, and celebrated his nuptials with the empress, who came to meet him by sea; and so returning into Germany in May, he again past through Florence, and had the same honours paid him on his return home as before. In his way home, to recompense some services done him by the marquis of Ferrara, he granted him Modena and Reggio.

The Florentines all this while omitted no preparations for the impendent war; and to gain themselves more reputation, and terrify their enemies, they and the duke of Milan entered into an offensive and defensive league with the king of France, which with great magnificence and joy they published throughout Italy. In the month of May fourteen hundred and fifty two, the Venetians thought fit no longer to defer the beginning of the war with the duke, but with fourteen thousand horse and six thousand foot invaded his dominions, entering by the way of Lodi; and at the same time the marquis of Montferrat, led by his own ambition, or set on by the Venetians, assailed him on the confines towards Alexandria. On the other side, the duke had brought together an army of eighteen thousand horse and three thousand foot, and having put garrisons into Alexandria and Lodi, and fortified all places where the enemy could offend him, with his army enters the territories of Brescia, where he did the Venetians infinite damage on all sides, spoiling the country, and sacking the weaker towns. And the marquis of Montferrat being defeated at Alexandria by the duke's forces, he could afterwards with more strength oppose the Venetians, and assail their country.

Whilst the war was thus managed in Lombardy, with various, but inconsiderable accidents; in Tuscany likewise began the war between king Alphonso and the Florentines, which was prosecuted

with no more valour nor danger than that in Lombardy. Ferrando, natural son to Alphonso, came into Tuscany with twelve thousand men, under the command of Frederic lord of Urbin, whose first enterprize was to besiege Faiana in the vale of Chiana; for the Sanesi being their friends, they entered on that side into the Florentine territories. This was but a small castle, and the walls inconsiderable; the garrison were very few, but were accounted brave men in those times; for their whole force was but two hundred sent thither from the senate, and yet before this mighty castle Ferrando encamps with his whole army, and either through the excess of courage in those within, or want of it in the besiegers, he was thirty six days before he won it: which loss of time gave the senate leisure to provide for other places of more moment, inforce their army, and put themselves in a better posture of defence than before. The enemy, possessed of this castle, marched forward into Chianti, where they were from two small country towns repulsed: so leaving them, they laid siege to Castelma, a castle placed on the confines of Chianti, within ten miles of Siena, weak by art, and weaker by nature; yet were these two weaknesses superior to the weakness of the army that assailed it, for after forty six days siege, they departed with shame. So formidable were these armies, and so dangerous these wars, that those castles and towns which now are slighted, as impossible to be

defended, were then esteemed as places impregnable!

Whilst Ferrando lay in the country of Chianti, he made many inroads and incursions into the Florentine territory, and entered within six miles of the city, to the great fear and damage of the Florentine subjects, who lay now with their army, consisting of about eight thousand men, under the command of Astorre de Faenza, and Gismond Malatesti, towards the castle of Colle; keeping at a distance from the enemy, least they should be forced to come to a battle; for they were of opinion whilst they kept intire, they could not lose the war; for the little castles that were lost would again by peace be recovered, and the great towns were secure, because the enemy durst not assail them. Besides all this, the king had an armado of about twenty foists and gallies, in the sea of Pisa, and whilst he laid siege to Castellina, they attempted the fort of Vada, which by the negligence of the governor they took: by which means the enemy much molested the adjacent country, but that molestation was soon prevented by some soldiers which the Florentines sent to Campiglia, who penned up the enemy to the sea-shore.

The pope concerned not himself in these wars further, than endeavouring a reconciliation of all parties: but though he meddled not with war abroad, he had like to have found danger at home.

There was living in these times, Stephen Porcari, ennobled by blood and learning, but much more famous for the excellency of his ingenuity. He had a mighty desire, as most men have that are covetous of glory, to do or at least attempt something memorable; and thought nothing nobler, than to redeem his country out of the hands of the prelates, and restore it to its pristine estate; hoping if he effected it, to be stiled at least the new founder, or second father of the city. The wicked lives of the prelates, and discontents of the nobles of Rome, made him hope for a happy issue; but that which most encouraged him were those verses of Petrarch's, in that song which begins, *Spirito Gentile*: where he says,

Sopra il monte Tarpeio Canzon vedrai
Un cavalier ch' Italia tutta Honora,
Pensofo piu d' altrui che di se stesso.

Stephen knew that poets were oftentimes filled with a divine and prophetic spirit, and therefore thought what Petrarch prophesied of in that song must necessarily come to pass, and that he must needs be the man to put in execution those glorious exploits, believing himself for eloquence, learning, favour and friends, superior to any other Roman; and having possessed himself with this rapture, could not govern himself with any caution, but by words, conversation, and manner of living, discovered himself; so that the pope grew jealous of him,

and to hinder mischief, confined him to Bologna, giving order to the governor of that city, to see and speak with him once a day. This first shock did not at all startle signior Stephen, but rather with more diligence he pursued his design, and, in the most wary manner he could, he held treaties with his friends, and oftentimes went and returned from Rome with such celerity, that he still shewed himself to the governor at the time limited : but at last, thinking he had drawn in a sufficient number to second him, he resolved no longer to delay the trial, but gave order to his friends at Rome, that at a set time they should provide a splendid supper, whither all the conspirators were invited ; with order, that every one should bring with him his most trusty friends, promising to be with them by the time supper was done. All was provided according to his directions, and Stephen came amongst them into the house where they supped : so that as soon as they had done supper, he appeared to the conspirators clad in cloth of gold, and with chains and other ornaments, to give him more majesty and reputation ; and having kindly embraced them, he, with a long oration, exhorted them to be of good courage, and dispose themselves to so glorious an enterprize. Then he ordered how the design should be performed, directing one party, next morning early, to seize the pope's palace, and the other, through the city, to call the people to arms. But the matter came to the pope's ear that night, some

affirm by the infidelity of the conspirators; others say, he knew Stephen was in Rome; however it was, that very supper night the pope caused Stephen, and most of his company, to be apprehended, and afterwards, according to their deserts and follies, put to death. This disastrous end had his design; and certainly, however his intention may be commended, none but will blame his judgment; for though such enterprizes may fill the imagination with some shadow of glory, they have always certain loss that attends their execution.

The war had now continued in Tuscany almost a year; and the spring fourteen hundred and fifty three, and season for armies drawing into the field, being pretty well advanced, the lord Alexander Sforza, brother to the duke, comes to assist the Florentines with two thousand horse; with which the Florentine army being well recruited, they resolved upon regaining what they had lost, and with little trouble retook all their towns. Then they went to besiege Foiano, which for want of care in the commissaries was sacked so, that the inhabitants being dispersed, they were with great difficulty brought back to their habitations, and not till upon the grant of large privileges, and other rewards, did they return. The fort of Vada was likewise regained; for the enemy, seeing they could not keep it, forsook and burnt it.

Whilst these things were transacting in the Florentine army, the Arragon forces, not having the confidence to draw nigh their enemies, were re-

treated towards Siena, and made many incurfions into the land of the Florentines, committing many robberies, outrages, and violences. Nor did the king fail to make trial of other ways to affail the enemy, by making them divide their forces, and by new troubles and affaults to beat them out of heart.

Gerardo Garribatorti was lord of the vale of Bagno, who always either out of friendship or obligation, had, together with his ancestors, been foldiers or pensioners to the Florentines. This man held a private correspondence with king Alphonfo, for the exchanging his estate for another, to be given him by the king, in the kingdom of Naples. This design was revealed to the Florentines, who, to found his intention, fent a messenger to remember him both of his, and his predecessors obligations, and to exhort him to continue faithful to the commonwealth. Gerardo feemed to admire at it, and with deep oaths and execrations protested that fo treacherous a thought never came into his mind, and that he would have gone himfelf to Florence, to remain there as a pledge of his faith; but being himfelf indisposed, what he could not do himfelf he would make his fon do; whom he prefently configns to the ambaffador to carry as a hostage to Florence. Thefe words, and thefe demonstrations, made the Florentines believe Gerardo to be fincere, and his accufers vain fellows and liars; whereupon they remained fully fatisfied. But Gerardo with more instance continues his treaty

with the king, and having soon concluded it, the king sends Frier Puccio, a knight of Jerusalem, with sufficient force to take possession of the castle and lands of Gerardo. But the people of Bagno, being faithful to the Florentines, very unwillingly promised obedience to the king's officers. Frier Puccio had already taken possession of the whole vale of Bagno, save only the castle of Corzano.

The happened to be with Gerardo, at the time of his making his resignation, one Antony Gualandi a Pisan, both young and courageous, who was highly displeased at this treason of Gerardo's; and having considered the situation of the fortress, and the countenance of the garrison, whom he perceived dissatisfied and discontented, seeing Gerardo standing at the gate of the castle to let in the king's people, slips between him and the gate, and with both his hands thrusts Gerardo out, and commands the guards to shut the fortress against him, and maintain it for the people of Florence. The report of which being heard in Bagno, and other adjacent places, all the people took arms against the Arragonians, and erecting the standards of Florence, drove them thence. As soon as this matter was heard at Florence, they imprisoned Gerardo's son, that was delivered them as hostage, and sending forces to defend that country, reduced it from a principality to a lieutenancy. But Gerardo, traitor both to his lords and to his own son, with difficulty escaped, leaving his wife,

family, and all his substance, in his enemies hands.

This success was much valued in Florence; for, had the king had the fortune to become lord of it, he might with small expence, at his pleasure, have made incursions into the vale of Tevere and Casentino, and so annoyed the republic, that they could not have kept their forces intire to oppose the Aragon army, then lying near Siena.

The Florentines, besides the preparations made in Italy, to suppress the force of the adverse league, had sent signior Agnolo Acciaivolo their ambassador to the king of France, to treat with him, to give leave to Renate of Anjou to come into Italy, in favour of the duke and them; whereby he might both defend his friends, and being in Italy, watch some opportunity to regain his kingdom of Naples: towards which, they promised him assistance of men and money. So that whilst the war was managed, in the manner we have related in Lombardy and Tuscany, the ambassador made an ageement with Renate, that he should, by the latter end of June, come with two thousand four hundred horse into Italy, and that at his arrival at Alexandria, the league should pay him thirty thousand florins, and afterwards, during the war, ten thousand florins a month. Pursuant to this agreement, he being about to pass into Italy was stopt by the duke of Savoy, and marquis of Montferrat, who, being friends to the Venetians, denied him passage. Whereupon the king was by the Florentine ambassador advised.

that, to add to his friends reputation, he should return back to Florence, and by sea carry some of his forces into Italy, and in the mean time, endeavour to persuade the king of France, to mediate with the duke of Savoy to grant passage to the rest: according to his advice it was done; for Renate came by sea into Italy, and his forces at the king of France's instance were admitted into Savoy.

King Renate was most honourably received by duke Francis, and the French and Italian troops, being joined, assailed the Venetians with so much vigour, that in a short time they recovered all the towns taken in the territory of Cremona; and not therewith content, possessed themselves of the greater part of the Brescian country; and the Venetian army not thinking it secure to keep the field, was drawn under the walls of Brescia. But winter approaching, the duke thought fit to draw the army into quarters, assigning Piacenza for the king's. Thus they lay all the winter fourteen hundred and fifty three, without doing any thing, and when spring was come, and it was thought the duke would draw into the field, and drive the Venetians out of all their territories on the main, the king let the duke understand, that he must of necessity return to France. This determination seemed as strange, as it was unlooked for by the duke, and very sensibly it afflicted him; but though he went in person to dissuade the king's departure, he could neither by prayers nor promises prevail, only he offered to leave part of his forces, and

send John his son to serve the league in his stead. This going away of Renate did not at all displease the Florentines, for having recovered their castles, they stood no longer in fear of the king; and on the other side, they desired the duke should recover no more than his own lands in Lombardy.

Renate, after his departure, sent his son John into Italy, who stayed not long in Lombardy, but came to Florence, where he was honourably received. The king's departure made the duke very inclinable to peace, and the Venetians, Alphonso, and the Florentines, being all weary, were extreme willing to it; besides, the pope had with all earnestness pressed, and did still press it. For this same year Mahomet, the Great Turk, had taken Constantinople, and made himself lord of all Greece, which extremely frightened the christian world, but especially the Venetians and the pope, who both thought they already felt his arms in Italy. Wherefore the pope prayed the Italian powers to send their ambassadors with authority to confirm an universal peace. They all obeyed, and coming to dispute the merits of the cause, there was found some difficulty in the treaty; the Venetians demanded from the duke Cremona, and the duke from them Bergamo, Brescia and Crema; so that it was thought impossible to resolve this difficulty.

But what at Rome many thought so hard to be done, at Milan and Venice proved easy; for whilst they were still treating peace at Rome, the duke and the Venetians on the ninth of April fourteen

hundred and fifty four, concluded it, by virtue of which, each was to be mutually restored to the towns and lands they had before the war, and the duke had liberty to recover the towns taken from him by the duke of Savoy, and the marquis of Montferrat, and other Italian princes, and a month's time was allowed to ratify it. The pope, Florentines, and with them the Sanesi, and other lesser potentates, ratified it within the time; and not content therewith, a peace was concluded between the Florentines, duke, and Venetians, for twenty five years.

King Alphonso was the only prince of Italy that seemed dissatisfied with this peace, thinking it somewhat entrenched upon his reputation, being received into it not as a principal but as an auxiliary; wherefore he kept long in suspense, and could not let his intentions be understood. But the pope and other princes having sent him many solemn embassies, he suffered himself to be persuaded by them and especially by the pope; and together with his son, entered into this league for thirty years; and the duke and king contracted double alliance, by intermarriage of their daughters to each others sons. Notwithstanding, that there might yet remain some seeds of war in Italy, he would not consent to the peace, till the colleagues had granted him leave, that he might, without injury to them, make war upon the Genoese, Gismond Malatesta, and Astorre prince of Faenza. And now the truce completed, Ferrando's son who was still at

Siena, returned into the kingdom, having by his expedition into Tuscany gained no dominion, but lost a great many men.

This universal peace being thus brought to an issue, all the fear remaining was, lest king Alphonso's enmity to the Genoese would disturb it. The Venetians, according to their custom when peace is made, having discharged Jacob Piccinino, one of their leaders, he, joining himself with several other captains out of employment, came to Romania, and from thence into the country of Siena, where Piccinino sitting down, began a war, and took many towns from the Sianese.

In the beginning of these troubles, and commencement of the year fourteen hundred and fifty five died pope Nicolas, and to him succeeded Calixtus the third. This pope to suppress the new and neighbouring war, under John Ventimiglia his general, drew together as great a power as so suddenly he could; and joining with the duke's and Florentine forces, who were likewise brought on foot to suppress these disorders, sent them against Piccinino; and the two armies engaging near Bolsena, though Ventimiglia was taken prisoner, yet Piccinino lost the day, making a flying retreat to Castiglione in Pescaia; and had not king Alphonso supplied him with money, he had been utterly undone; which made many think this attempt of Piccinino's was made by the king's orders. Whereupon Alphonso supposing himself discovered, to

reconcile himself to the colleagues and the peace, from which he seemed by this feeble war to have alienated himself, ordered things so, that Piccinino should restore to the Sianese their towns, and they give him twenty thousand florins; and this agreement made, he received Piccinino into the kingdom.

In these times, though the pope busied himself in bridling Piccinino's violences, yet he was not wanting to take order for the support of christianity, which he beheld sadly oppressed by the Turks: wherefore he sent into all christian provinces ambassadors and preachers, to persuade the princes and people to arm themselves in defence of their religion, and with their estates and persons encourage an expedition against the common enemy. Whereupon in Florence great alms were gathered, and many wore the sign of the cross as a badge, that they were ready to serve in person: many solemn processions were likewise made; nor was there any thing wanting, either in the public or private persons, to demonstrate, they would be of the first rank of Christians both for counsel, men, and money, to forward such an enterprize.

But the heat of this Croisado was cooled by a new accident which intervened. The Turk being with his army at the siege of Belgrade, a town situated in Hungary on the river Danube, was by the Christian army routed, and himself wounded: so that the pope and other christians having outlived their fears, conceived for the loss of Constan-

tinople, the preparations for war became lukewarm, and by the death of John, the Vaivod, general in that victory, grew quite cold.

But to return to the affairs in Italy. In the year fourteen hundred and fifty six, the war begun by Jacob Piccinino being put an end to, so that arms among men were quite laid aside, it appeared as if God had taken them up; for there happened such prodigious storms of wind in Tuscany, that the like was never heard of before, and the effects of them will seem wonderful, and astonish future generations.

On the twenty sixth of August, an hour before day, from the Adriatic sea, opposite to Ancona, there arose a dark, thick and foggy cloud, extending itself for the space of two miles; which, crossing Italy to the sea opposite to Pisa, forced by superior power, whether natural or supernatural, was torn asunder and divided, and the broken pieces furiously agitated, and seeming to fight and jostle each other, sometimes mounting up to heaven, and then again with great fury descending, and often whirled about with violent motion, still sending before them a most tempestuous wind, with strange and monstrous flashes and flames of fire; and from these broken and confused clouds, those furious winds, and frequent lightnings, issued a dreadful noise, more terrible than ever any earthquake or thunder that had ever been heard, to the terror and amazement of all beholders, who could think nothing

but that the world was at an end, and that fire, earth and water, were returning into their first chaos. Wherever this prodigious storm reached, it produced strange and monstrous effects; but the most notable of all happened about the castle of St. Caxiano. This castle is about eight miles from Florence, on the hills that part the vale of Pisa and Greve: this furious tempest passing between that castle and the borough of St. Andrew, seated upon the same hill, touched not St. Andrews, and only in the passing threw down some turrets and chimneys in St. Caxiano; but about as much forward as it is between one of those towns and the other, many houses were levelled with the very ground, and the roofs of the churches of St. Martin, at Bagnuolo and St. Maria della Pace, whole, as they stood upon them, were carried above a mile distance: a carrier likewise, with his mules, in the valley, a good distance from the road, were found dead: all the stubbornest oaks, and strongest trees, that would not bend to this violence, were not only torn up by the roots, but carried a good distance from the place where they grew. So that when the storm was over, men were struck with wonder and admiration to behold the country waste and desolate, churches and houses ruined, poor people lamenting to see their habitations thrown down, and under their ruins their beasts and family buried: so that whoever saw or heard it, were affected with horror and compassion.

Certainly, by this, God intended rather to threaten than chastize Tuscany; for had this storm entered into any city, where houses and inhabitants were thick, as it did among the oaks and trees, and small dispersed houses, undoubtedly it had caused that ruin and destruction, which can hardly be imagined. But the Deity was pleased with this small example to revive in mens minds the memory of his power. But to return where I left.

King Alphonso was, as I said before, dissatisfied with the peace, and since the war, he had by Jacob Piccinino, moved without any reasonable occasion, had produced no important effect, he would make trial what those would produce which by the articles of the league he had power to move. And therefore in the year fourteen hundred and fifty six, he by sea and land makes war on the Genoese, desirous to restore the state to the Adorni, and take it from the Fregosi who now governed; and in the mean time sends Jacob Piccinino against Gismond Malatesta; but he having placed strong garrisons in his towns, cared not much for Piccinino, so that on this part the king did no great matter; but his attempt on Genoa created him and his kingdom more war than he had a mind to.

Peter Fregosa was now Doge of Genoa, who, fearful he could not support himself against the king's power, resolved at least to give what he could not keep himself, to one that could defend him from his enemies, and might some time or o-

ther, for such a service, give him a proportionable reward. To which end he sends ambassadors to Charles the seventh of France, offering him the dominion of Genoa. Charles accepts the offer, and sends John of Anjou, son to king Renate, to take possession of that city, who sometime before having left Florence was returned to France; and Charles persuaded himself that John, having learned many of the Italian customs, might govern that city better than any other, and he was likewise in hopes he might find an opportunity to make from thence an expedition to Naples to recover that kingdom which Alphonso had taken from his father. John come therefore to Genoa, where he was received as Prince, and all the forces of that city and state delivered into his possession. This accident much displeased Alphonso, who doubted he had engaged a too important enemy against himself; yet not at all dismayed, he courageously pursues his enterprize, and had already brought his armada under Villa Marina to Porto Fino; where seized with a sudden distemper he dies.

By his death, John and the Genoese were delivered from this war; and Ferrando, who succeeded his father in the kingdom, grew extremely suspicious; for having now an enemy of such reputation in Italy, and being jealous of many of his nobles, whose fidelity he doubted, and whose inclination to novelty he knew, he was not without cause fearful, lest they should take part with the French: he likewise feared the pope, whose ambi-

tion he was sensible of, lest whilst he was yet unsettled in his kingdom, he should endeavour to deprive him of it. All his hopes were in the duke of Milan, who was no less concerned for the kingdom, than Ferrando himself; for he was jealous, should the French become masters of it, they might likewise grasp at his estates, to which he very well knew they laid a claim.

Wherefore no sooner was Alphonso dead, but the duke sent letters and forces to Ferrando; these to give him aid and reputation, those to exhort him to be courageous; assuring him he would not in any necessity forsake him. The pope, after the death of Alphonso, designed to give that kingdom to Peter Lodovic Borgia his nephew: but to give his design a more specious pretence, he declared, that he intended to reduce it under the empire of the church, and to that purpose persuaded the duke not to give any encouragement to Ferrando; offering him those towns he was already possessed of in that kingdom.

But in the height of these thoughts, and contrivances of new troubles, pope Calixtus dies; to whom succeeded Pius the second, a Sianese, of the family of the Picolhomini, and called Æneas. This pope employing all his thoughts for the good of christendom, and the honour of the church, setting aside all private interest and passion, at the intreaty of the duke of Milan, crowns Ferrando king; judging, he might rather preserve the peace of Italy by preserving him in his possession, than either by

favouring the French claim, or usurping that kingdom, as Calixtus would have done, to himself: in requittal of which favour, Ferrando makes Antony, the pope's nephew, prince of Malphi, and gives him his natural daughter to wife; he likewise restores Beneventum and Terracina to the church.

And now Italy seemed in perfect quiet, and the pope disposed himself to promote an expedition against the Turks, as Calixtus had begun to do, when there happened a dissention, between the Fregosi and John lord of Genoa; which kindled a more important war, than any had been before. Petrino Fregosi was retired to a castle of his upon the Riviera; not thinking himself recompensed by John of Anjou in any proportion, to the deserts of himself or his family, who had been the only instruments to make him prince of that city, so that at last they came to open enmity. This was very pleasant to Ferrando, as the only means and path to his security; wherefore he supplied Petrino with men and money, hoping by him to drive John from that state: whereof John, having intelligence, sends into France for aid, with which he marches to encounter Petrino, but found him by the great assistance given him so strong, he thought it best, to retreat, and guard the city. Into which Petrino one night enters, and takes possession of some places; but day appearing, he was by John's forces encountered, and slain, and most of his people killed or taken.

This victory encouraged John to venture an expedition against the kingdom; and in October, in the year fourteen hundred and fifty nine, with a great armado he sails to Baia, and thence proceeds to Sessa, where he was by that duke received. The prince of Tarento, the Aquilani, and many other cities and princes, joined with John; so that the whole kingdom was in confusion; which Ferrando seeing, had recourse to the pope and duke; and that he might have the fewer enemies, makes peace with Gismond de Malatesta; at which Jacob Piccinino was so angry, being a profest enemy of Gismond's, that deserting his service he joins with John. Ferrando therefore sends money to Frederic lord of Urban, and with as much speed as he could, gathers together, for those times, a good army, and on the river Sarni faces his enemy; but in the engagement Ferrando was routed, and most of his best captains taken. After this defeat, the city of Naples, and some few princes and towns, continued faithful to Ferrando, but the greatest part yielded to John. Jacob Piccinino would have had John, immediately upon this victory, to have marched directly up to Naples, and possess himself of the head of the kingdom: but John would not, saying, "He would first possess himself of all the other parts of his dominions, and then assault him;" thinking, that if he were master of all the other towns, Naples would soon be gained. But taking this course, he took away victory from himself, for he did not consider, that the members more

easily follow the head, than the head the members. After his defeat, king Ferrando had saved himself in Naples; whither those of his subjects, that were driven from their estates, fled to him for shelter; and, in the gentlest manner he could, he gathers money, and makes a little head of an army: he sends afresh for aid to the pope and duke, who both supplied him in a larger manner, and with more expedition than before. So that now grown strong, he marches out of Naples, and having begun to recover reputation, recovers some of the lost towns.

Whilst war raged thus in the kingdom, there happened an accident, which took from John both his reputation and power to overcome. The Genoese, weary of the covetous and insolent government of the French, took arms against the king's governor, and forced him to fly into the little castle: in this attempt the Adorni and Fregosi were agreed, and supplied by the duke of Milan with men and money, as well to recover the state as defend it. So that king Renate, who was coming with a fleet to the assistance of his son, hoping he might regain Genoa, by means of the little castle, as he was landing his forces, was so totally routed, that he was forced with shame to return to Provence. This news coming to the kingdom of Naples quite daunted John of Anjou; yet he would not give over, but for some time maintained the war, aided by those nobles, who for their rebellion against Ferrando, thought they should find no pardon. At last, after

undry-accidents, a pitched battle was fought between the two royal armies, in the year fourteen hundred and sixty three, near Troja; wherein John was defeated: yet was not the loss of the battle of that consequence, as the loss of Jacob Piccinino, who deserted him and joined with Ferrando; so that having no forces to rely upon, he retreats to Histria, and thence returns to France. This war lasted four years, and he lost that by his own neglect, which the valour of his soldiers had several times won.

In this war the Florentines were not at all concerned, though true it is, John of Arragon, newly raised to that kingdom, by the death of Alphonso, did by his ambassador request them to assist his nephew Ferrando, as they were obliged by the league made with Alphonso his father, To which the Florentines answered, " They were not bound
" to help the son in a war the father had brought
" upon himself; and that, as it was begun without their counsel, so it should be continued and
" ordered without their aid." Whereupon the ambassadors, on their king's behalf, protested the penalty of the obligation, and damages, and in a rage departed the city. So that the Florentines were all the time of this war, as to foreign affairs, in peace; but they enjoyed not that quiet within, as in the next book shall be fully declared.

B O O K VII.

THOSE, who read the former books, may perhaps imagine that a writer of the Florentines affairs may have extended too largely the relations of things done in Lombardy, and the kingdom; yet, neither hitherto have I, nor shall I for the future, avoid such narratives: for though I never promised a history of Italy, yet I judge it proper to make it a relation of the most notable things that happened in that province, because the omitting them would render our history more obscure, and consequently much less delightful; especially since from the actions of other people and princes of Italy oftentimes arose those wars, in which the Florentines were forced to concern themselves. Thus from the war between John of Anjou, and king Ferdinand, proceeded that enmity and implacable hatred, which ensued afterwards between Ferdinand and the Florentines, and particularly between Ferdinand and the family of the Medici; for the king had complained not only, that himself was not assisted in that war, but that his enemies were by the Florentines favoured, and his displeasure therefore conceived against them was

the occasion of exceeding many inconveniences, as shall hereafter be declared. And because I have written at large such matters as have happened without the city, till the year fourteen hundred and sixty three, it will be requisite for the better relating those troubles, which in that time happened within the city, to look some years backwards.

But first, according to my custom, let me, by way of discourse, say, that whoever thinks any republic can be united, flatters himself with a vain hope. True it is that some divisions are prejudicial, and others again beneficial to a commonwealth. Those are attended with prejudice and damage, which are with factions and followers accompanied; and those produce benefit and advantage which without factions and followers are maintained. Since then no founder of a common-wealth can so establish it that no enmities arise in it, he ought at least to provide, that no factions get head; to which end he is to consider that in all cities, citizens gain themselves reputation either by public or private means.

Public renown is attained to by victory in the field, by the taking of towns, by the careful and discreet discharging of embassies, or by the giving to the state prudent and successful counsels: private means by which reputation is attained to, are gratifying particular citizens, defending them from punishment, supplying them with money, advancing them undeservedly to honour and employment, and entertaining and pleasing the commonalty with

sports and gifts; and from hence arise parties, followers and factions. And though reputation thus attained may offend, yet it may likewise be useful, when not incumbered with factious followers, because it is only founded on private good; for though it is impossible by the wisdom of man to prevent animosities from arising among such citizens, yet having no followers, that for their private ends adhere to them, they cannot prejudice the commonwealth, but may well advantage it; for in aspiring to their own ends, they must necessarily advance the interest of the state, and by being continually watchful over one another's actions, they take care that no law nor civil constitutions be infringed.

The enmities of Florence were always accompanied with factions and followers, and were therefore always prejudicial; nor was any victorious faction longer united than the adverse party continued in some power; but as soon as their enemies were quite extinct, then they divided among themselves, having no fears to restrain, nor rule nor order to bridle them. The faction of Cosmo de Medici got in the year fourteen hundred and thirty four the superiority, and because the oppressed party had still some life, and was supported by many mighty men, they through fear continued united, and tolerably quiet, so long as they lived free from error and scandal, nor had by sinister dealings incurred the hate of the people; so that whenever the government had occasion of the people to re-establish their authority, they found them

always ready to give unto the chief of that faction the Balìa, or whatever authority they desired, and thus from the year fourteen hundred and thirty four to fourteen hundred and fifty five, being one and twenty years, they were six times confirmed in the Balìa by the usual election of the councils.

There were in Florence, as we have several times before mentioned, two mighty citizens, Cosmo de Medici, and Neri Capponi; of which Neri was one who had by public means attained his reputation, so that he had many friends, but few followers: on the other side, Cosmo, having both by public and private ways aspired to his greatness, had friends and followers in abundance. These two, during their lives, continuing united, easily obtained of the people whatever they desired, because they had love mixed with their authority; but in the year fourteen hundred and fifty five Neri being dead, the faction found it difficult to be confirmed in their authority; and Cosmo's particular friends, and those of the most powerful in the state, were the occasion of it; for standing no more in awe of the adverse party now quite extinct, they had a desire to diminish his authority, which proved the beginning of those divisions that afterwards in the year fourteen hundred and sixty six happened. For those to whom the government appertained, in the councils, where they freely debated the public administrations, advised, that it was convenient the Balìa should not be reassumed, but that the purses

should be filled up, and the magistrates chosen by lot according to the favour and method of the former imbursements.

To allay this humour, Cosmo had but one of these two remedies to choose, either with those followers which still adhered to him, to seize the government by force, and compel all the rest to submit, or else to let matters proceed, and in time let his friends know, that they deprived not him, but themselves of their reputation and government; of which two remedies he chose the last, for he knew that by this way of choice, the purses being full of his friends, he could not run any hazard, and might at pleasure resume the government.

The city thus again reduced to the choosing magistrates by lot, the universality of the citizens believed they had regained their liberty, and that the offices should no more be supplied according to the will of the mighty men, but as they themselves thought fit; so that now one great man's followers, and then another's were beaten, and they who used to behold their houses full of suitors and presents, now beheld them empty both of men and gifts. They likewise saw themselves become equal with those who had been accounted far inferior to them, and their equals were become their superiors; neither were they respected nor honoured, but many times laughed at, and derided; and in the streets and market places the people took a freedom to discourse what they pleased, either of them, or the common-wealth; so that they soon

became sensible, not Cosmo, but they, had lost the authority. All which Cosmo dissembled, and when ever any thing pleasing to the people was debated, he was the first to promote it.

But that which most of all terrified the great men, and gave Cosmo an opportunity of being again sought after, was the reviving of the Catasto of fourteen hundred and twenty seven; whereby taxes were to be imposed by rule of law, and not by the will of men. This law passed, and commissioners to put it in execution elected, made all the great citizens assemble together, and going to Cosmo, intreated him that he would be pleased to rescue both them and himself from the hands of the people, and restore the state to that reputation which might increase his power, and recover their honour. To which Cosmo made answer, that he was content, provided the law was made orderly by consent of the people, and not by any force, for otherwise he would have no concern in it, nor should it once be moved. They therefore attempted the councils by a law to establish a new Balsa, but obtained it not; whereupon all the great men returned to Cosmo, and in most humble manner besought him to consent to a parliament, which Cosmo utterly denied out of design to make them sensible of the error they had committed; and because Donato Ccohi, then Gonfalonier of justice, would without his consent have summoned a parliament, Cosmo procured him to be so scoffed and

scorned at by the senators that sate with him in office, that growing mad upon it, he was sent home to his house for a lunatic.

Nevertheless lest he should at length suffer things to run so far out of order that they would not so easily, when he had a mind to it, be retrieved; Luke Pitti, an opiniative daring man, being elected Gonfalonier of justice, he judged it convenient to leave the whole management of the affair to his discretion, that if there happened any miscarriage, the fault might be imputed to Luke, and not to him. Luke, at his entrance into the magistracy, made several propositions to the people for reviving the Balìa, and being refused it, threatened those which sat in the councils with haughty and injurious words, and soon after proceeded to deeds; for in August fourteen hundred and fifty three, on the vigils of S. Laurence, having filled the palace with armed men, and summoning the people into the Piazza, he made them by force consent to that, which voluntarily they would never have agreed to.

The government thus reassumed, and the Balìa created, the chiefest of the magistracy, by the advice of a few, to begin that government with terror, which they had gotten by violence, confined signior Girolamo Machiavel, with some others, and many they deprived of their offices. Girolamo, for not obeying his confinement, was proclaimed rebel, and going up and down Italy, stirring up all princes and states against his country, was in

Lunigiana, by the treachery of one of the senators there, taken, and brought to Florence, where he died in prison.

This kind of government, for eight years that it lasted, was most violent and insupportable; for Cosmo through age and distemper grown weak and indisposed, not being able to give that attendance he was wont on the public affairs, a few citizens at their pleasure preyed upon, and spoiled the city. Luke Pitti, as a reward of his good service done to the commonwealth, was knighted; and he to testify no less gratitude to the state, than the state had done to him, would have those, formerly called Priors of the Trades, that at least they might reserve the title of what they had lost possession of, now to be called Priors of the Liberty; and whereas the Gonfaloniers used formerly to be seated on the right hand of the rectors or governors, he ordered they should hereafter take place in the midst of them; and that God might seem to be a partaker in these actions, public procession and prayers were ordered to be made with thanksgivings for the restoration of their honours.

Signior Luke had been both by the senate and Cosmo very richly presented; and after their examples the citizens were even at strife who should first bring his gift, so that it was generally supposed the whole value of his presents could not amount to less than twenty thousand ducats: which raised him to such a height of reputation, that not Cosmo but Luke governed the city, and swelled him

him to that confidence, that he began to erect two princely and magnificent palaces, one in Florence, the other at Rucciano about a mile distant from that city. But that in Florence was much larger and more stately than ever till that time had been attempted to be built by any private citizen; and to bring it to perfection he was thrifty of all advantages, and spared not to make use of any extraordinary means; for not only particular citizens and private persons presented him, and supplied him with necessaries for the building, but the whole commonalty and people laid their hands to the work; and besides, every banditto, thief, or assassin, or any other offender that stood in fear of punishment, if he was any way useful to the work, might in these fabrics find a secure sanctuary. Though the other citizens built not like him, yet were they no less tyrannical and rapacious than he; so that whilst Florence had no enemy from abroad to oppose it, it was destroyed and wasted by its own citizens.

During these transactions, happened as hath been said before, the war in the kingdom, and the pope in Romania had some skirmishes with the family of the Malatesti, from whom he had a great mind to take Rimini and Cesena, then in their possession. So that in this enterprise, and in studying how to carry on a war against the Turks, pope Pius spent his papacy; whilst Florence continued in its troubles and divisions. The first breach in Cosmo's party began in the year fourteen hundred

and fifty five, upon the occasion before recited, which by his prudence as we have declared, was for that time composed; but in the year fourteen hundred and sixty four, Cosmo's distempers and weakness increased so violently that he departed this life. Both his friends and enemies lamented his death; for those who for reasons of state loved him not, beholding the extortion of the citizens, whilst he yet lived, out of reverence to whom they were somewhat restrained, feared, now that he was gone, they should be utterly ruined and destroyed; for in Peter his son they had little confidence, who though he was a good man, yet being both sickly and unsettled, and raw in the government, he was forced to bear respect to others, who now run on in a full career of rapine and oppression, having no reins to curb or restrain them.

Cosmo was the most famous and renowned citizen, not being a military man, that ever had lived in the memory of mankind, either in Florence or any other city whatever; not only exceeding all other citizens of his time in riches and authority, but likewise in liberality and prudence. For that which, among many other admirable qualities, entitled him most of all to the being esteemed the principal person of his country, was his being liberal and magnificent, there scarce being a citizen that lived in any repute, but he had lent great sums of money to, and oftentimes upon information of the necessities of persons of quality, without being asked, he supplied their occasions. Nor were his

magnificent buildings less evidences of the greatness of his mind; for besides his reparations, he founded the convents and churches of St. Mark, and St. Laurence, and the monastery of St. Verdiano in Florence, the church of Gerolamo, and the abbey thereto belonging in the mountains of Fiesole, and a church of friars minors in Magello; and moreover in the abbeys of the holy cross of the Servi, of Agnoli and St. Ninuato, he erected many sumptuous altars and chapels: all which churches and chapels, besides the erecting them, he endowed and furnished with all ornaments necessary for divine service.

To which sacred buildings and dedications may be added his private fabrics, whereof are still extant one palace in the city more than becoming a person of his quality, and four in the country at Careggio, Fiesole, Cafaggivolo and Febrio, all houses fitter for princes than private citizens. And lest his magnificent edifices in Florence should not give him sufficient renown, he built in Jerusalem an hospital for poor and diseased pilgrims, in which work he expended vast sums of money. And though these palaces, and all his actions and works were so majestic, and he lived in Florence like a prince, yet all his deportments were tempered with so much prudence, that he never exceeded the bounds of common modesty and civil order; for in his conversation, house-keeping, attendance, and marrying his children, he surpassed not any other discreet and civil citizen; for he knew that an extraordinary pomp and train, which is daily viewed and gazed

at, contracts more envy than solid actions covered with honest modesty. When therefore he was to match any of his sons, he sought not the alliance of princes, but married John to Cornelia of the family of the Alexandri, and Peter to Lucretia of the family of the Tornabuoni, and of his grand-children by Peter, he married Bianca to William Pazzi, and Anne to Bernard Rucelai.

As to intrigues of state, the affairs of neighbouring princes, and civil government at home, none of his time were equal to him for intelligence; by which means only, in so great variety of fortune, in so giddy a city, and such inconstant citizens, he preserved himself in the government for one and thirty years: for his wisdom gave him foresight; and discerning inconveniences afar off, he either prevented them, or if they grew upon him, made such preparation they could not offend him; whereby he not only suppressed domestical and civil ambition, but prevailed over many princes with such happy prudence and success, that whoever joined in league with him and his country, became at least equal, if not superior to their enemies; and whoever opposed them, lost either their time, money or estate. Which the Venetians can sufficiently testify, who, when united with him against Philip, had always the better; but disunited, were first by Philip, and afterwards by Francis, oppressed and overcome; and when they joined with Alphonso against the common-wealth of Florence, Cosmo by his sole credit reduced both Naples and

Venice to such straits for want of money, that they were forced to accept what peace he pleased. And indeed all the difficulties Cosmo encountered with, both without and within the city had issues glorious to himself, and disgraceful to his enemies, so that civil discords always added to his authority at home, and war without to his renown and reputation abroad; for to the dominions of the commonwealth he annexed Borgo a Sancto Sepulchro, Montidoglio, Casentino and Valdibagna. Thus by his virtue and fortune he oppressed his enemies, and advanced his friends. He was born in the year thirteen hundred and eighty nine, on the feast of St. Cosmo and Damian. The beginning of his life was full of troubles, as appears by his banishment, imprisonment and danger of death. After the ruin of pope John, with whom he went to the council of Constance, he was forced to save his life by flying in disguise; but from forty years of age he lived very happily; so that not only those who adhered to him in public administrations, but all they who managed his money throughout Europe were partakers of his felicity, whereby many families in Florence were raised to great riches, as the Tornabuoni, Benci, Portinari, and Saffeti; and indeed every one depending on his counsel and fortune enriched themselves. But though in building churches, and distributing of alms, and doing good offices, he was at a continual expence, yet he would oft-times lament to his friends, that he could never spend so much to the honour of God, but he still

found himself in his books a debtor. He was but mean of stature, and brown of complexion, yet of a very venerable presence; not learned, but very eloquent and of excellent natural parts, officious to his friends, charitable to the poor, edifying in conversation, wary in counsel, speedy in execution, and in his speeches and replies witty, yet grave.

In his first banishment Rinaldo sending to tell him that, "The hen was sett," he replied, "That she could hatch but ill so far out of her nest:" and to some other rebels, who told him they could not sleep, he said, "He believed it since they had robbed themselves of their rest." Of pope Pius persuading princes to take arms against the Turk, he said, "An old man undertakes a young enterprize," To the Venetian ambassadors, who, with those of king Alphonso, came to Florence, to make their complaints against the republic, he shewed his bare head, and having asked them what colour it was of, they answered white; to which he replied, "Ere long your senators will have heads as white as mine."

Some few hours before his death, his wife asking him why he shut his eyes, "To use them to it," replied he: some citizens, after his return from banishment, telling him that he spoiled the city, and offended God by banishing so many honest men, he replied, "Better a city spoiled, than lost, and that two yards of thorn cloth made an honest man, and that estates were not defended

“ with beads in mens hands.” Which sayings gave occasion to his enemies to asperse him, that he loved himself more than his country, and this world more than the other. Many other of his sayings might be recorded, which as unnecessary I omit.

Cosmo was moreover a great lover and advancer of learned men, and therefore brought Argiropolo the Grecian, one of the most learned men of those times to Florence, that he might instruct the Florentine youth in the Greek tongue, and other sciences he was skilled in. He entertained in his own house Marsilius Ficinus that second father of the Platonic philosophy, whom he entirely loved; and to the end he might with better conveniency apply himself to his study, and Cosmo have him always ready at hand, he gave him a dwelling house near his own palace of Carreggio. This his wisdom, these his riches, this manner of living, and his fortune, were the causes that in Florence he was both loved and feared by his fellow-citizens, and by the princes not only of Italy, but of all Europe marvellously esteemed, leaving foundations to his posterity, that they might in virtue equal him, and in fortune far excel him, and attain to as great authority and reputation as himself had enjoyed in Florence, not only in that city, but in all Christendom.

However towards the latter end of his life he underwent some very sensible afflictions; for of his two sons Peter and John, the last, in whom he

placed all his confidence, died; and the other was infirm, and unapt to manage either public or private affairs; whereupon causing himself after his son's death to be carried about his house, he was heard sighing to say, "This house is too great for so small a family." His generous mind was likewise troubled, that he had not as he thought sufficiently enlarged the Florentine dominions with some honourable conquest, and it grieved him the more, because he perceived himself to have been deceived by Francis Sforza, who had promised him while he was yet earl, that assoon as he had made himself duke of Milan, he would win Lucca for the Florentines; but he failed him; for having got the dukedom, his mind changed, and he thought it best to enjoy that dominion in quiet, and therefore performed not his promise, either to Cosmo or any other, nor waged any wars but what were necessary for his own defence; which fretted Cosmo exceedingly that he should have taken so much pains, and been at so much charge to advance an ingrateful and perfidious man. He likewise found that the infirmities of his body made him incapable of following either public or private affairs with that vigour and diligence he was wont; so that he beheld both one and the other go to ruin, the city spoiled by its own citizens, and his estate wasted by his children and ministers. All these accidents disquieted him towards his latter end; yet he died full of glory, and in the height of renown both at

home and abroad; all the citizens, and all christian princes condoling his death with his son Peter. He was buried with great solemnity, the whole city attending his herse to the church of St. Laurence, where he was interred, and by public command in sculpture over his tomb he was stiled **THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY.**

If in recording the virtues and actions of Cosmo, I have imitated those who write the lives of princes, and not those who write general histories, let none admire at it, for having been so extraordinary a man, he deserves to be mentioned with extraordinary honour.

Whilst Florence and Italy were in this state and condition, Lewis king of France was assaulted with a fierce and powerful war raised by his barons, with the assistance of Francis duke of Britany, and Charles duke of Burgundy, which kept him so employed, that he could afford no assistance to John duke of Anjou in his expedition against Genoa and the kingdom; yet judging he stood in need of some ones help, the city of Savona remaining in the power of the French, he makes Francis duke of Milan lord of that city, withal letting him know, that if he pleased he might with his allowance possess himself of Genoa: which Francis willingly hearkens to, and either by the reputation of the king's friendship, or by the favour of the Adorni, makes himself lord of Genoa. And that he might not appear ingrateful to the king for his kindness.

he sends into France his eldest son Galeazzo with fifteen hundred horse to his assistance.

Thus Ferdinand of Arragon, and Francis Sforza, became, the one duke of Lombardy and prince of Genoa, and the other king of all the kingdom of Naples; and having contracted an alliance together, they began to consult how they might fortify themselves in their estates, so that they might live, and securely enjoy them, and after their deaths leave them peaceably to their heirs. Upon the point they judged it necessary that the king should secure himself of those barons, who in the wars with John of Anjou had fought against him; and that the duke should endeavour to extirpate the Bracceschi his natural and implacable enemies, and who under Jacob Piccinino were grown into great reputation; for he was now the greatest captain remaining in Italy; and having no settled dominion, it was requisite for those who had estates to stand upon their guard, and especially the duke, who from example given by himself, judged he could neither securely enjoy his dominions himself, nor leave them peaceably to his sons, so long as Jacob lived. Wherefore the king sought an accomodation with his barons, and to assure himself of them, managed things so politically that he had happy success in it; for the princes, who yet waged war with the king, saw their manifest ruin, if they longer held out, and if they came to an agreement must be left at discretion; so that though at first

they were somewhat doubtful, yet because men always strive to avoid certain mischiefs, it follows that princes may the easier deceive those of lesser power. So these princes, seeing the manifest danger of the war, trusted to the king's word; and yielding themselves into his hands, were afterwards by him in sundry ways, and upon various occasions, cut off; which so terrified Jacob Piccinino, who then lay with his forces at Solmona, that to secure himself, and take from the king all opportunities of oppressing him, by the mediation of his friends he treated a reconciliation with the duke, who having made such offers that he could not expect greater, Jacob throws himself into his hands, and accompanied only with one hundred horse goes to Milan to present himself to duke Francis.

Jacob had a long time been a soldier under his father, and with his brother first for duke Philip, and afterwards for the people of Milan; so that by long converse he had gained many friends in that city, and a general good-will, which his present condition increased. For the prosperous fortune, and the present power of the Sforzeschi had begotten them envy, and the adversity and long absence of Jacob had created in the peoples minds compassion towards him, and a longing desire to see him; all which appeared at his coming; for few of the nobles but went to meet him, and the streets where he passed were thronged with people, all crowding to see him, and the fame of his arms was every where discoursed of. Which honours hastened his ruin,

for they blew the coals of the duke's jealousy, and inflamed his desire of getting rid of him; which the more covertly to do, he declared his pleasure to have the marriage solemnized with Drusiana his natural daughter, to whom Jacob had been long since contracted; and then agrees with Ferdinand to entertain him as his captain general with one hundred thousand florins imprest. After which conclusion Jacob, with an ambassador from the duke, and his wife Drusiana, goes to Naples, where he was joyfully and honourably received, and for many days entertained with much feasting and jollity; but having asked allowance to go to Solmona where his forces lay, he was by the king invited into the castle, and dinner ended, together with Francis his son, made prisoner, and shortly after put to death. Thus our princes of Italy jealous of that virtue in others, they had not in themselves, strove to extirpate it, till having utterly rooted out all seeds of it, they exposed this province to that ruin, which shortly wasted and destroyed it.

Mean while pope Pius having composed the affairs of Lombardy, seeing the time was proper for it, there being an universal peace, began to promote a war against the Turks, pursuing those rules and methods before set down by his predecessors, to which all princes promised either money or men; and Matthew king of Hungary, and Charles duke of Burgundy, offered to go in person, and were by the pope made generals of the expedition: and so

far the pope proceeded, that he left Rome and went to Ancona, where he had ordered the general rendezvous, the Venetians having promised shipping to carry the army into Sclavonia. Soon after the pope's arrival at Ancona, there assembled thither such multitudes of people, that all the provisions of that and the neighbouring country would not suffice, but hunger began to oppress the army; besides there wanted money to buy things necessary, and weapons to arm the naked; the king of Hungary, and the duke of Burgundy, did neither of them appear; and the Venetians sent only one of their captains with some gallies, rather to show pomp, or to boast they had kept their faith, than to transport such an army. Here the pope being old and weak, in the heat of these troubles and disorders died, after whose death every one returned home.

This pope dead, in the year fourteen hundred and sixty five, Paul the second, a Venetian born, was elected to the papacy: and to the end other principalities of Italy might likewise change their government, the year following died Francis Sforza duke of Milan, after having been sixteen years lord of that dukedom, and Galeazo his son was declared duke. The death of this prince made the divisions of Florence increase, and sooner come to effect.

After Cosmo's death, his son Peter, remaining heir both of his riches and honours, called unto him Diotisalvi Neroni a man of great authority and

reputation among the chiefest of the citizens, and in whom Cosmo reposed so much trust, that at his death he ordained Peter to have recourse to him for advice in the management both of his private and public affairs. Peter acquaints Diotisalvi with his father's bequest, and the confidence he had in him; and that he might be obedient to his father as well dead as living, craves his counsel as well to the management of his estate, as to the government of the city; and to begin with his own private affairs, he made all his factors and ministers give in unto him the state of their accounts, to the end seeing the order and disorder of every thing, he might, as his prudence should dictate, advise him. Signior Diotisalvi promised his utmost diligence; but having viewed and well examined all the accounts, and finding in them great disorders; like a man that had more respect to his own ambition, than to the love of Peter, or gratitude to his father, he imagined that he might easily rob Peter of his reputation, and cheat him of that inheritance and power his father had left him; to which purpose he comes to Peter with a counsel that seemed very just and reasonable, but under which his ruin lay concealed: he declared to him the disorder of his affairs, and how much ready money he must of necessity provide to uphold his credit and reputation in the state, telling him there was no honest way to remedy those disorders than by calling in the money that was owing to his father, as well by strangers as citizens; for Cosmo, to gain fol-

lowers in Florence, and friends abroad, was very liberal in lending his money, so that by that very means he became creditor to sums of no small importance. Peter thinks the counsel good and honest, willing to repair himself with his own; but no sooner did he cause his money to be demanded, but the citizens resented it, as if he had not asked his own, but demanded what was theirs, reviling him as ingrateful and covetous, and without any respect railing against him; whereupon Diotisalvi, seeing Peter by his advice fallen into universal and popular disgrace, joined himself with Luke Pitti, Agnolo Acciavolo, and Nicolas Soderini, determining to take from Peter both his reputation and authority.

These men were by divers respects moved to this design: Luke desired to succeed in Cosmo's stead, being already grown so great, that he scorned to be observant to Peter; Diotisalvi, who knew Luke unfit to be the head of the government, imagined if Peter were removed, the whole reputation might in a short time fall upon him; Nicolas Soderini was desirous that the city should live more at freedom, and the magistrates govern without controul; signior Agnolo bore a particular hate to the Medici, upon this account: Raphael his son had sometime before taken to wife Alessandra of the Bardi with a very great portion; she, whether through her own peevishness or their malice, received very ill usage from her husband and father-in-law; whereupon Lorenzo Harione her kinsman, out of

compassion to the young lady, went one night with many armed men, and rescued her out of Agnolo's house. The Acciavoli made complaint of this injury done them by the Bardi; the cause was referred to Cosmo, who gave sentence that the Acciavoli should restore Aleffandra her portion, and then her return to her husband should be left at her own arbitrement. Agnolo thought Cosmo did not deal friendly with him in this sentence, but since he could not be revenged on him, he now determined to be revenged on his son; but how different soever the occasions were, these conspirators all declared one and the same intention, affirming they would have the city governed by the magistrates, and not by the counsels of a few.

The hatred of Peter, and ill-will towards him, very much increased, by many merchants becoming bankrupt, who laid all the fault upon Peter, his unexpected calling in his money, having thereby stretched their credit, and to the great disgrace and prejudice of the city, forced them to fail; to which may be added his treating a marriage with Clarice of the family of the Orfini; and his eldest son Laurence, which gave every one full scope to revile him, publicly venting abroad that he disdained to match his son with a Florentine, nor could contain himself longer as a private citizen, and therefore prepared to usurp the principality; for he, that scorns to have his fellow citizens of his kindred, had a mind to make them his servants, and therefore it was unreasonable he should expect them to be his

friends. And now the leaders of this conspiracy concluded they had the victory in their hands; for the greatest part of the citizens, cheated with the name of liberty, wherein those engaged against him had clothed their design, adhered to them.

These humours thus set a boiling in mens hearts, it was thought convenient by those, who liked not these civil discords, to endeavour by some new found feast or jollity to settle, or at least divert the minds of men; for generally the idle people are the instruments of all alterations. To remove this idleness a little out of the way, and turn mens minds upon other thoughts than that of the government, the year being gone round since Cosmo's death, they took occasion to give the city some divertisement, appointing two solemn shows, as hath been usual in other cities; one was a representation of the three Magi following the star of the nativity from the east, which was done with so much pomp and magnificence, that in the contriving, ordering and acting it, it found the whole city near five months employment. The other was a tournament, where the choice youth of the city exercised their skill and valour against the most famous cavaliers of Italy; and among the Florentine youth Laurence the eldest son of Peter Medici gained the most honour, for not by favour, but by his own valour, he won the richest prize.

These triumphs ended, the citizens returned to their former discontents, and every one with more eagerness than before urged his own opinion, from

whence many differences and troubles arose, which by two accidents were mightily increased. One was, that the authority of the Balia was expired; and the other, the death of Francis duke of Milan, whose son Galeazo, the new duke, had sent ambassadors to confirm the articles made between his father and the city, which among other things concluded that there should be a yearly sum of money paid to the duke. The leaders of the faction, averse to the Medici, took occasion from this demand, publicly to oppose in the councils the consenting to it, alleging that league was made with Francis, and not with Galeazo; so that by Francis's death, the obligation died: nor was there any reason to revive it; for that there was not in Galeazo that virtue that was in Francis, and by consequence they could not, nor ought not to expect those advantages from him: and though they got but little by Francis, from him they must look for less. But if any citizen had a mind to entertain him to maintain his own private power, it was a thing opposite to civil order and the liberty of the city. Peter, on the other side, urged that it was imprudence, out of avarice to lose so necessary a friend, and that nothing could conduce more to the security of this common-wealth and all Italy, than a firm league with the duke, that the Venetians, seeing them united, might not entertain any hopes, either through feigned friendship, or open war, to oppress that dukedom; for no sooner should they hear that the

Florentines were alienated from him, but they would have their arms in their hands, and finding him young and raw in the government, either by force or fraud subdue his country, the consequences of which must needs be the ruin of Florence.

These reasons were not accepted, and the enmities and heart-burnings began to appear; and of both factions several met every night, the friends of the Medici in the monastery of the Little Cross or Croceta, and the adversaries at La Pieta; who, solicitous for Peter's ruin, had made several citizens subscribe themselves favourers of the design. And among other times, being one night met together, they held a particular council about their manner of proceeding, and every one was willing and ready to abase the power of the Medici; but they differed in the way. Those who were most temperate and modest, advised, that since the authority of the Balìa was expired, they should find means to oppose its being revived, and that done, it was their intention, that the councils and magistrates should govern the city, whereby in a short time Peter's power would come to nothing, and with his loss of reputation in the government, he would likewise lose his credit in merchandise; for his estate lay so, that if he were restrained from making use of public money, he must certainly be ruined, and then there would be no more danger of him, but the city without blood or banishment would have regained its liberty, which every good citizen ought to desire: but if they went about to

act by force, infinite dangers must be hazarded; for whoever is falling, if he be thrust forward by others, will catch hold to support himself; besides when nothing extraordinary is acted against him, he would have no occasion or pretence of arming himself, or engaging friends; or if he did, it would turn to his greater reproach, and breed suspicion in every man, thereby contributing to his own ruin, and giving others advantage to oppress him. Others of the assembly disliked this delay, affirming time would prove his and not their friend, for if they consented to be satisfied with an ordinary proceeding, Peter ran no hazard at all, and they a great one; for the magistrates, though his enemies, would permit him to live in the city, and his friends, as it happened in fifty eighth, would make him prince: that indeed the preceding counsel was good, but it was not wise, and therefore it was best utterly to ruin him, whilst the minds of men were incensed against him. The means to effect it, were by arming themselves within, and entertaining in their pay the marquis of Ferrara without, to prevent their being disarmed; and then when there chanced a senate for their purpose, make sure work. Upon this they concluded, expecting the entrance of the next senate, by which they meant to govern themselves.

Among these conspirators was Nicolas Fidino, who officiated as their clerk: he, withdrawn by more certain hope, discovered all the debates of his

enemies to Peter, and produced a list of the conspirators and subscribers. Peter was startled to see the number and quality of the citizens engaged against him, and advising with his friends determined likewise to get subscriptions on his side, giving the charge of it to some of his most trusty friends; and such levity and inconstancy found he in the minds of the citizens, that many subscribed in his favour, who had before subscribed against him.

Whilst all things were in this perplexity, the time came for the new election of the supreme magistracy, and Nicolas Soderini was chosen Gonfalonier of justice: it was a miracle to see with what concourse, not only of worthy citizens, but of all sorts of people, he was accompanied to the palace; and by the way they put a garland of olive upon his head, to signify that on him depended the safety and liberty of his country. By this and many other experiences, it may appear how disadvantageous it is to enter into any office or power with the general voice and opinion of the world. For men not being able to perform what is expected from them, the generality having formed in their imaginations things impossible to be executed; they fall from that height of their esteem to a depth of contempt and infamy.

Thomas and Nicolas Soderini were brothers. Nicolas was more daring and courageous, but Thomas much the wiser; who preserving an entire friendship for Peter Medici, and knowing his brother's humour how he only desired the liberty of

the city, and that the state might be settled without damage to any one, persuaded him to a new imbursement, whereby the purses might be filled with such citizens as loved to live in freedom; by which means the government would according to his desires be confirmed, and settled without any tumult or injury to any person. Nicolas readily gave ear to his brother's counsels, and employed himself in these vain imaginations, during the whole time of his magistracy, and by his own friends, the heads of the conspiracy, he was suffered so to consume it; for envy would not suffer them to let Nicolas have the honour of restoring the government, hoping they might some other time, under some other Gonfalonier, effect it their own way. Thus Nicolas's magistracy expired, who begun many things, but finished none, and went out with as much dishonour as he had entered with applause.

This accident gave courage to Peter's faction, confirming his friends in their hopes of success, and making those who before stood neuters adhere to him; so that the balance seeming even on both sides, both parties for some months without any tumult temporised: notwithstanding, Peter's party every day gained strength, which his enemies growing sensible of, they consulted together, and imagined they might easily do that by force, which either they knew not how to do, or would no more attempt by the power of the magistrate; they

therefore concluded to kill Peter, who now lay sick at Carreggi, and to that purpose sent to the marquis of Ferrara to advance with his forces towards the city, and Peter once slain, they determined to run armed into the Piazza, and make the senate establish such a government as should be most to their liking; for though all the lords were not their friends, yet they hoped to make those, who were not, give their consent for fear.

Signior Diotisalvi, the better to dissemble his intention, often visited Peter, reasoning with him about uniting the city, and giving him his advice. All these practices had been discovered to Peter; and besides Signior Dominico Martegli gave him intelligence, how Francisco Neroni, brother to signior Diotisalvi, had solicited him to be of their party, assuring him of certain victory and happy success. Whereupon Peter determined to be the first in arms, taking occasion from his enemies practices, with the marquis of Ferrara. He pretended therefore to have received a letter from John Bentivoglio, prince of Bologna, acquainting him that the marquis of Ferrara was near the river Albo with his forces, and publicly declared he was designed for Florence.

And thus upon these advertisements Peter took arms, and in the midst of a great multitude of armed men comes into Florence: whereupon all the followers of his party likewise armed themselves, and their adversaries did the like, but not in so good order as Peter's party; for these were pre-

pared, and had their instructions what to do: but the other had no warning at all of it. Signior Diotisalvi's house standing near Peter's, he thought himself not secure there, and therefore ran up and down, sometimes to the palace, to persuade the lords to make Peter lay down his arms, sometimes to find out Luke to keep him firm to their party. But he that shewed most courage was Nicolas Soderini, who taking arms, was followed by all the common people of his quarter; and going to signior Luke's house encouraged him to mount on horse-back, and go into the Piazza in favour of the lords, who were on their side, and where doubtless the victory would be certain, and not stay in his house, either to be basely oppressed by his armed enemies, or disgracefully deceived by the unarmed, otherwise he would come to repent it when it was too late; for now, if he desired war with the ruin of Peter, he might easily have it; or if he would have peace, it was much better to be in a condition to give than receive terms. These words nothing moved Luke Pitti, whose resolution was taken, and his mind quite turned by the fair promises, new alliances, and new conditions made him by Peter; for he had already married his niece to John Tornabuoni; infomuch, that he exhorted Nicolas, likewise, to lay down his arms, and return to his house; for all he aimed at, was that the city should be governed by magistrates, and so it would be, if every man would lay down his arms; and the senate, in which they had the greater party, would

be judge of their differences. Nicolas therefore, seeing he could not otherwise persuade him, returned to his house, having first told him, “ I cannot alone establish the welfare of my city, but I can prognosticate the mischiefs that must of necessity befall it. This course which you take will be the cause of loss of liberty to our country, of honour to yourself, of wealth and estate, and of their country itself to others.” The senate in this tumult had shut the palace gates, and withal the magistrates kept themselves within, not seeming to favour either party.

The citizens, and especially those who had sided with Luke, seeing Peter in arms, and the adversaries disarmed, began to bethink themselves not to offend or oppose Peter, but how best to become his friends: whereupon the prime leaders of the factions went into the palace, and in the presence of the senate, debated many things about the present state of the city, and the means of reconciling all differences; and since Peter, because of his weakness, could not come to them, they all with one accord determined to go to his house, excepting only Nicolas Soderini, who having first recommended his children and affairs to his brother Thomas, retired to his country-house, there to attend the event of these things, accounting himself unfortunate, and his country miserable. The other citizens being come before Peter, one appointed to speak for the rest, “ complained of the tumults raised in the city, declaring them to be in the fault, who had

“ first taken up arms; and not knowing what
 “ Peter, who was the first that had done it, de-
 “ fired, they were come to know his pleasure, and
 “ if it appeared to be for the good of the city,
 “ they were ready to second him:” to which Pe-
 ter replied: “ That not he who first took up arms
 “ was the cause of these commotions, but those
 “ who administered the occasion of their taking up:
 “ and if they would well consider in what manner
 “ they had proceeded against him, they would
 “ find no cause of wonder, that for his own safety
 “ he had acted as he had done; for then they
 “ would perceive, that their nocturnal conventi-
 “ ons, their subscriptions, their conspiracies to
 “ take from him the city with his life, made him
 “ arm. But since with these arms he had not
 “ moved from his house, it was evidence enough
 “ that his whole design was to defend himself, and
 “ not offend others. Nor had he any other aim,
 “ or desired any thing else but his own security
 “ and quiet; nor had ever given the least occasion
 “ to make them believe he fought for more: for
 “ since the authority of the Balìa was expired, he
 “ had not contrived by any extraordinary way to
 “ revive it, and was very well satisfied the magi-
 “ strates should govern the city, whilst they were
 “ content with it; for they ought to remember
 “ that Cosmó and his children knew how to live
 “ honourably in Florence, both with and without
 “ the Balìa, and that in the year fourteen hundred
 “ and fifty eight, it was not by his house, but by

“ themselves renewed. And if now they had no
 “ desire to have it again established, neither had
 “ he: but this compliance with them, was not e-
 “ nough, for he perceived they believed they could
 “ not live in Florence, whilst he was in it. A
 “ thing he never could have so much as thought
 “ or believed, that his father’s friends and his
 “ should fear to live in Florence with him, having
 “ never given the least cause to be thought other
 “ than a quiet and peaceable man.” Then ad-
 dressing his speech to signior Diotisalvi, and his
 brethren there present, he reproached them in
 words grave, but full of anger, with the kindnesses
 they had received from his father, the trust he re-
 posed in them, and their barbarous ingratitude.
 And his words had such force and effect, that had
 not Peter prevented some of the standers by, they
 had been knocked down. In conclusion Peter as-
 sured them he was ready to approve whatever they
 or the senate should determine, and for his part
 desired nothing more, but to live quiet and secure.
 After this many things were debated, but nothing
 concluded, unless in general terms, that it was
 necessary the city should be reformed, and new or-
 ders made in the state.

Bernardo Lotti sat at this time Gonfalonier of
 justice, a man not trusty to Peter; therefore he
 thought it not convenient to attempt any thing in
 his time; which delay he thought of little impor-
 tance to his affairs, his magistracy being almost ex-
 pired: but at the election of the lords, who were

to sit for September and October in the year fourteen hundred and sixty four, Robert Lioni was elected chief magistrate, who as soon as he entered upon his office, all things else being prepared, summoned the people into the Piazza, and created a new Balìa, all of Peter's party; who soon after elected magistrates according to the humour of the new government, which so terrified the heads of the adverse faction, that signior Agnolo Acciavoli fled to Naples, and signior Diotisalvi Neroni, and Nicolas Soderini to Venice; Luke Pitti staid in Florence, confiding in the promises made him by Peter and his new alliance. Those which fled were declared rebels, and all the family of the Neroni dispersed, and signior John Neroni, then archbishop of Florence, to avoid a worse mischief, chose a voluntary exile at Rome.

Many other citizens, who soon after went away, were confined to sundry places. Nor did this suffice, but a public procession was ordained, to return thanks to God for the preservation of the state, and the reuniting of the city. In the solemnizing of which, many citizens were taken and tormented, and some of them afterwards put to death, and others banished. But in all this change of affairs nothing was more remarkable or exemplary, than the fall of Luke Pitti, who in one and the same instant felt the difference between victory and loss, honour and dishonour. His house was now a perpetual solitude, which was wont to be thronged with the numerous concourse of clients;

his relations were afraid not only of accompanying him; but even of saluting him in the streets; for some of them had been deprived of their offices, some of their estates, and all were threatened the like usage: those stately fabrics he had begun were deserted by the workmen; the flatteries he was used to hear, were turned into revilings, and his honour into reproach, and many, who to obtain his grace and favour had made him presents of value, now redemanded them as things lent, and those, who used to exalt him to the skies, publicly scandalized him as a violent and ingrateful man: so that he now too late indeed repented his not giving credit to Nicolas Soderini, wishing he had died an honourable death.

Those, who were banished, studied several ways how they might be restored to that city they had lost: but signior Agnolo Acciavoli, before he would attempt any innovation, thought best to make trial how he stood with Peter, and whether there was any hopes of reconciliation, and to that end wrote him the following letter.

“ I cannot but laugh at the sports of fortune,
 “ and how she takes delight to make enemies
 “ friends, and friends enemies: you may remember
 “ in your father’s banishment, more concerned
 “ for his injury, than my own danger, I lost my
 “ country, and had like to have lost my life; nor
 “ was I ever wanting, while Cosmo lived, to honour
 “ and favour your house, nor since his death
 “ had ever any design to offend you. It is true

“ your sickly constitution, and the tender years of
 “ your children, created those fears in me, and
 “ made me conceive the government ought to be
 “ put in such a method, that after your death our
 “ country might not be ruined: upon which con-
 “ sideration, what I acted was done, not against
 “ you, but for the good of my country; which,
 “ if it be a fault, deserves both for my good in-
 “ tention-sake, and my former good deeds, to be
 “ cancelled: nor can I believe, since your family
 “ has for so long a time found me so faithful, but
 “ I may from you find compassion, and that all
 “ my deserts will not for one fault alone be now
 “ blotted out.”

Peter having received this letter, thus returned
 his answer; “ Your laughing there, occasions my
 “ not weeping here; for if you return to Florence,
 “ I must go weep at Naples: I confess you bore
 “ some good-will to my father, but you may as
 “ well confess you have been recompensed for it,
 “ so that your obligation is so much greater than
 “ ours, as deeds are more esteemable than words:
 “ since then for your good deeds you have been
 “ rewarded, why should you wonder if for your
 “ evil you be justly punished? nor is the love of
 “ your country to be allowed as an excuse, for no
 “ man living will believe this city to have been less
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 “ Acciavoli. Live therefore in disgrace, since you
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Whereupon signior Agnolo, despairing of ever procuring his pardon, comes to Rome, and confederates himself with the archbishop and other exiles, endeavouring by all bitter ways they could imagine, to blast the credit of the factory of the Medici residing in Rome; which Peter could hardly prevent, yet by the assistance of his friends, their devices were defeated. On the other side, signior Diotisalvi and Nicolas Soderini sought with all industry imaginable to incense the Venetians against their country, supposing that if Florence were assaulted from abroad, the government being new, and generally hated, they would not be able to support it.

There lived in these times in Ferrara John Francisco, the son of signior Palla Strazzi, who in the change of government in fourteen hundred and thirty eight, was with his father driven out of Florence. These new rebels declared to John Francisco, how easily they might be restored to their country, if the Venetians would undertake a war, which they believed they would be ready to do, if they could contrive any way how to contribute to part of the expence, or otherwise they doubted it. John Francisco, who was desirous to be revenged of the injuries he had received, gave easy ear to their counsels, and promised to be assistant in the attempt with his whole estate. Whereupon they went all to the duke, lamenting their exile, and protesting they were driven out for no other crime, but endeavouring that their country should

live according to its laws, and that the magistrates, and not a few citizens only, should be honoured and respected; whereupon Peter de Medici with his followers, accustomed to live tyrannically, had deceitfully taken arms, deceitfully made them lay down theirs, and afterwards as deceitfully driven them from their country; and not content therewith, but they had made devotion to God a pretence and colour to oppress others, who, under their faith given them, still remained in the city; for in the midst of those public and sacred ceremonies, and solemn supplications, that they might make God a partaker in their treasons, they had imprisoned and put to death many citizens, an example of great impiety and horror. To revenge this, they knew not where better to have recourse, than to the senate, which, enjoying its liberty, ought to have compassion of those who had lost theirs. They therefore begged the assistance of free-men against tyrants, of good men against the wicked, remembering them how the family of the Medici had been the cause of their losing the dominion of Lombardy, who in contradiction of the other citizens had supported earl Francis against their senate; so that if the justice of their cause could not move them, they ought to be stirred up by a just hatred and desire of revenge for their own injuries.

These last words moved the whole senate, and they determined that Bartholomew Coglione their

general should invade the Florentine territories; who with all speed drew together the army, and with him joined Hercules d'Este sent from Borso duke of Ferrara. They at their first enterance, the Florentines not being yet in order, burnt the burrough of Decadala, and made some spoil in the adjacent country: but the Florentines, after they had driven out the enemies of the Medici, had entered into a new league with king Ferdinand, and Galeazo duke of Milan, and entertained for their general Frederic earl of Urbin; so that having such good friends, they valued their enemies the less: for Ferdinand sent his eldest son Alphonso, and Galeazo came in person, each with convenient forces, and all rendezvoused at Castracazo a castle of the Florentines, seated at the foot of the Alps, between Tuscany and Romania.

Mean while the enemies were retreated towards Imola; so according to the custom of those times, some light skirmishes happened, but no general assault was made, no towns besieged, nor shewed they any disposition of engaging each other; but lying, and loitering in their tents, with abominable cowardize managed the war. This tediousness much displeased the Florentines, who beheld themselves oppressed with a war in which they spent much, and could hope to gain but little; and the magistrates blamed those they had appointed commissioners of the war, who gave them an account that duke Galeazo was in the fault; for he having the greatest authority, and but slender experience,

knew not how to take advantages, nor would be ruled by those that did, and that it was impossible, so long as he staid in the army, that any thing should be undertaken to their honour or profit. Whereupon the Florentines represented to the duke, " That it did much redound to their credit, " and reputation, that he was personally come to " assist them, for his presence only was enough to " terrify their enemies, yet they valued the safety " of his person and dominion above their own advantage; for whilst he was in safety, they hoped " for all prosperous success, but if he should fall, " they had reason to fear the worst of adversities: " They were therefore of opinion, it was not very " secure for him, to be long absent from Milan, " being newly entered into the government, and " having many powerful enemies he ought to be " jealous of, who, whilst he was absent, might " contrive many mischiefs against him: wherefore " they advised him to return to his country, leaving some part of his forces for their defence."

The counsel pleased Galeazo well, and without farther consideration he returned to Milan. This impediment thus removed, the Florentine captains, to shew he was indeed the true occasion of the former neglect, made their approaches to the enemy, so that they came to a set battle, which continued half the day, neither party giving ground to the other; yet there was not one slain, only some few horses wounded, and some prisoners taken on

both sides. The winter now approached, and the season wherein armies use to draw into quarters; wherefore signior Bartholemew retreats towards Ravenna, and the Florentine forces into Tuscany, and those of the king and duke home to their own countries.

But since by this assault there had happened no commotion in Florence, as the Florentine rebels had promised there would, the soldiers beginning to want their pay, a peace was treated, and after very few debates concluded; whereupon the Florentine rebels, lost to all hope, departed several ways. Signior Diotisalvi went to Ferrara, where he was by duke Borso received, and kindly entertained; Nicolas Soderini retired to Ravenna, where with a small pension allowed him by the Venetians, he grew old and died. He was accounted an honest and valiant man; but in resolving upon any thing, doubtful and slow, which made him when he was Gonfalonier lose the opportunity of overcoming, and afterwards when he was a private man strive to regain it, and could not.

Peace concluded, those citizens, that remained superior in Florence, could not persuade themselves to have overcome, if they did not with all manner of injuries afflict not only their enemies, but those they suspected averse to their party; wherefore they persuaded Bardo Altoviti then Gonfalonier of justice, to remove many citizens from their offices, and to banish others; which increased their power, and terrified their adversaries, and the power they had

got they exercised without any moderation, as if God and fortune had given them the city for a prey. Of which Peter knew but little, and that little he did he could not remedy, by reason of the infirmity of his body; for the gout so tormented him, that he could use no member but his tongue, nor apply any other remedy to their disorders but good advices, intreating them to live civilly, and rather possess their country with safety, than be driven out with its destruction: and to divert the city principally, he determined on that magnificent solemnization of the marriage between his son Lorenzo, and Clarice of the family of the Orsini; which wedding was performed with all that pomp and splendor that became the magnificence of so great a man; and many days were spent in feasting, balls and masques. And to complete the greatness of the family, two military shows were exhibited to the people, one the representation of a battle on horseback, and the other the storming of a town, in both which, all things were marshalled in excellent order, and performed with admirable dexterity.

Whilst these things were doing in Florence, the rest of Italy lived likewise in quiet, but in great jealousies of the Turk's greatness, who pursued his victories against the christians, and had now taken Negropont, to the infamy and dishonour of the christian name.

In these times died Borso marquis of Ferrara, to whom succeeded Hercules his son; likewise died

Gismondo of Rimini, a profest enemy to the church, and Robert his son remained heir to his estates, who afterwards gained the reputation of being one of the prime captains of Italy.

There also died Pope Paul, and to him succeeded Sixtus the fourth, called before his creation Francis of Savona, a man of base and most vile condition; yet for his appearances of virtue, made first general of the order of St. Francis, and afterwards Cardinal. This pope was the first that began openly to show what a pope could do, and how many things before called errors might be covered under the pontifical authority. There were of his family Peter and Girolamo, who, as every one believed, were his sons, yet he palliated that scandal under the more civil name of nephews: Peter, because he was a friar, he raised to the dignity of cardinal, with the title of St. Sisto; to Girolamo he gave the city of Furlì, taking it from Antonio Ordelaſſi, whose ancestors had a long time been princes of that city. Yet this strange and ambitious way of proceeding made the princes of Italy pay him the more esteem, and every one sought his alliance; so that the duke of Milan gave Catherine his natural daughter to Girolamo for wife, and with her the city of Imola, which he had taken from Taddeo Alidoffi, in dower. Between this duke likewise and king Ferdinand, an alliance was likewise contracted; for Elizabella, daughter to Alphonso the king's eldest son, was married to John Galeazo eldest son to the duke.

Italy lived now in a profound quiet, and the only care of these princes was to have a watch one upon another, and by new alliances, leagues and friendships to secure themselves: yet in so great a calm of peace, Florence was still in a storm, tossed and tormented by its own citizens; and Peter, violently afflicted with his distemper, could not stand at helm, nor make any provision against the violent gusts of their ambition; yet to disburden his own conscience, and make them, if he could, ashamed of their courses, he called before him the chief Florentines, and thus reproved and advised them.

“ I never once believed I should have seen the
 “ time that the manners and behaviour of my
 “ friends, should make me rather love and desire
 “ the prosperity of my enemies, and that my vic-
 “ tory had proved a defeat; for I thought I had
 “ confederated with men, whose appetite might
 “ have been bounded, and who would have been
 “ content, if not with living quiet and secure
 “ themselves, yet at least with being revenged on
 “ their enemies: but now I see how strangely I am
 “ deceived, and how ignorant I was of the natural
 “ ambition of men in general, and much more of
 “ yours; for you are not content to be princes in
 “ so mighty a city, to share among a few of you
 “ those honours, dignities and profits that were
 “ wont to be in common to the whole body, and
 “ to have the estates of your enemies divided a-
 “ mongst you; nor are you satisfied to load others

“ with all public charges, whilst yourselves, freed
 “ from all payments, enjoy the profit ; but to your
 “ advantages you must add the afflicting them with
 “ all manner of injuries. You rob your neigh-
 “ bours of their goods, you sell justice, and fly
 “ from civil judgment, oppressing the innocent,
 “ and promoting the insolent ; nor do I believe
 “ there is in all Italy so many examples of violence
 “ and injustice, as in this city. Why should we
 “ take life from our country, that has given a
 “ being to us ? or why destroy those that have
 “ made us victorious ? why disgrace and scorn those
 “ that have given us honours ? I promise you by
 “ the faith which all honest men ought to have and
 “ receive, if you continue to behave yourselves so,
 “ that I be forced to repent that I was victorious,
 “ I shall carry myself in that manner you shall
 “ likewise repent of your abuse of the victory.

Those citizens returned an answer suitable and agreeable to the occasion, but reclaimed not themselves from their violence and oppression : whereupon Peter privately caused signior Agnolo Accia-voli to come to Cassagiolo, and had a long discourse with him about the state of the city, nor is it to be doubted but, had not death prevented him, he had recalled all the banished to curb the insolence of those that were within : but death put a stop to these his honest intentions, for grievously afflicted with diseases of body, and torments of mind, he died in the three and fiftieth year of his age ; whose worth and virtue could never be truly known to his

country, because most of his time he lived accompanied by his father, and those few years he out-lived him, were consumed in civil discords, and infirmity of body. Peter was buried near his father in the church of St. Laurence, and his funeral was solemnized with all the pomp becoming so great a citizen. He left behind him two sons, Lorenzo and Julian, who though they gave great hopes they would prove beneficial and serviceable to their country, yet their youth made all men doubtful.

Among other principal men of state in Florence, and who much excelled all the rest, was Thomas Soderini, whose wisdom and authority was not only revered in Florence, but by all the princes of Italy. On him after Peter's death, did the whole city cast their eyes, and many citizens visited, and many princes complimented him as the chief man of the state: but he being prudent, and having a fore-sight of his own fortune, and that of the family of the Medici, answered none of the princes letters, and told the citizens, that not to his, but to the house of the Medici they ought to pay their visits. And to perfect by deeds what he had persuaded in words, he assembled all the prime noble families in the convent of St. Antonio, whither he likewise caused Lorenzo and Julian Medici to come, and after a long and grave oration of the present state of the city, of all Italy, and of the humours of princes, concluded, that if they desired the union and peace of Florence, and to secure it from civil dissention and foreign war; it was of all things

most necessary they should honour those two young men, and maintain the reputation of their house; for men seldom repine to submit to things they are accustomed to; but new lords, as they are easily set up, are easily thrown down, and it was ever more facile to maintain that power, which by long continuance had outworn envy, than erect a new, which all men will be watching opportunities to oppress.

After signior Soderini, spake Lorenzo, and notwithstanding his youth, pleaded with so much gravity, prudence and modesty, that he put all men in hopes he would prove, what he afterwards did; and before they departed that place, those citizens swore to cherish them as their children, and they to own them as their fathers; upon which Lorenzo and Julian were honoured as princes of the city, and they again never declined Soderini's counsel. And thus living at rest, both at home and abroad, and no appearance of war to disturb the public quiet, an unlooked for tumult happened as a preface of future troubles.

Among the families ruined by the faction of Luke Pitti, was that of the Nardi; for Silvester and his brother, heads of that family, were first banished, and afterwards in that war, moved by Bartholomew Coglione, declared rebels, among whom was Bernardo, brother of Silvester, a stout and active young man. He by reason of his poverty, less able to support banishment; and by reason of the conclusion of the peace, seeing no hopes of re-

turn, determined to attempt something, which might occasion the renewing of the war; for oftentimes of weak beginnings, great effects ensue, provided men are more diligent in the prosecution, than the beginning of an enterprize. Bernardo had great acquaintance in Prato, and more in the country of Pistoia, especially with the house of the Palandri, a family, though bred in the country, yet very numerous, and those like the other Pistoiesi, nursed in arms and blood. He very well knew they were discontented, having been in some differences of theirs a little severely treated by the Florentine magistrates; and besides he was well versed in the humour of the Pratesi, who believed themselves governed with too much avarice and pride, and had particular knowlege of some men's aversion to the state: all which things gave him hopes he might kindle a fire in Tuscany, by stirring up Prato to rebellion, to which so much fuel would soon be added, that it would be found a hard matter to quench it.

These his thoughts he communicates to signior Diotisalvi, asking him, that, supposing his design on Prato succeeded, what assistance he might by his means expect from other princes. The undertaking to signior Diotisalvi seemed very dangerous, and almost impossible to effect; yet seeing he might now at the hazard of others, make a new trial of his fortune, he encouraged him to proceed, promising him certain assistance from Ferrara and

Bologna, if he so far succeeded as to defend Prato but fifteen days.

Bernardo, by these promises, heightened with hopes of happy success, privately conveys himself to Prato, and communicates the matter to severals, whom he finds readily disposed to it: of the like temper he finds the family of the Palandri, and having agreed upon the time and manner of execution, they sent advice of all to signior Diotisalvi.

Cæsar Petrucci was at this time Podesta of Prato for the Florentines. Those governors of the town have an usual custom to keep themselves the keys of the gates, and when any of the city, especially in unsuspected times, comes by night to desire to go out, or to have any let in, he sends the keys. Bernardo, who knew this custom, comes a little before day, together with the Palandri, and about a hundred armed men, and presents himself before the gate that leads to Pistoia, and those within, who knew the conspiracy, were likewise ready armed; one of whom went to the Podesta to desire the keys, feigning there was a townsman desired entrance. The Podesta, who could not have the least suspicion of any such accident, sends one of his servants with them, from whom before he was far from the palace, the keys were taken by the conspirators, the gates opened, and Peter and his armed followers let in; and being all now together, they again divided into two bodies, one of which led by Silvester a Pratese surprised the cit

tadel, and Bernardo with the other seized the palace, committing Cæsar with all his family to the custody of some of his followers: then they set up their cry throughout all the town, proclaiming Liberty, Liberty.

Day now began to appear, and at the noise, many of the people ran into the market place; and hearing how the cittadel and palace was surprised, and the Podesta with his family imprisoned, they stood amazed how this accident should happen. The eight citizens, to whom the administration of affairs is there committed, assembled in their palace to consult what was best to be done: whilst Bernardo and his company having marched up and down the town, and getting none to follow them, hearing the Eight were assembled, came to them, and told them the reason of his enterprise was to free them and their country from servitude, and how much glory they would gain, if taking arms they accompanied him in so brave an attempt, by which they would gain perpetual quiet and eternal fame; putting them in mind of their ancient liberty and present condition, declaring what sure assistance they would have, if but for a few days they held out, affirming he had a party in Florence, who would shew themselves as soon as they had intelligence that this town would unanimously follow him.

The Eight, not moved at his words, replied,
 " That they knew not whether Florence lived in

“ liberty or bondage, as a thing they were not
 “ concerned to enquire into; but this they knew,
 “ they would never desire any other liberty than
 “ to obey those magistrates that governed Florence,
 “ from whom they had received no injury to ob-
 “ lige them to take arms against them; wherefore
 “ they advised him to release the Podesta, and
 “ march as fast as he could with his people out of
 “ the town, thereby with speed freeing himself
 “ from that danger, whereinto he had unadvisedly
 “ thrown himself.” Bernardo, not at all daunted
 with these words, resolved to try if threats would
 move the Pratesi, whom he could not move with
 intreaties; and to terrify them, he thought the best
 way was to put the Podesta to death; whom tak-
 ing out of prison, he commanded to be hanged at
 the palace window. Cæsar was brought almost to
 the window with the halter about his neck, when
 he saw Bernardo, who commanded his death, to
 whom turning about he said. “ Bernardo, you
 “ put me to death, believing then to be followed
 “ by the Pratesi, but you will find the quite con-
 “ trary; for the reverence these people bear to the
 “ governors, sent them from the Florentines, is
 “ so great, that when they see this injury done to
 “ me, they will conceive such a hatred against you
 “ as will procure your ruin; for not my death, but
 “ my life may be the occasion of victory to you;
 “ for if I command them to fulfil your pleasure,
 “ possibly they may do it, and by following your
 “ directions, you may accomplish your design.”

Bernardo, who had not now much choice to make, thought this counsel very reasonable, and therefore orders him to go to the window, and command the people to yield him obedience; which when Cæsar had done, he was sent back into custody. The weakness of the conspirators was by this time discovered, and many Florentines, who inhabited the town, had gathered themselves together, among whom was signior George Ginori, a knight of Rhodes. He was the first made any opposition, and assaulted Bernardo who was running up and down the market place, sometimes intreating, and sometimes threatening, if they did not obey and follow him: but signior George and his party charging him, he was wounded and taken; which done, it was an easy matter to release the Podesta, and overcome the rest; who being but few, were most of them taken or slain.

Mean while the news of this accident was brought to Florence, and made so much more than the truth, that the first relations told, that Prato was taken, the Podesta with his family all slain, and the town full of enemies; Pistoia in arms, and many of the citizens in this conspiracy; whereupon the palace was immediately full of citizens, who came to consult with the senate.

There happened to be in Florence, Robert of San Severino, accounted a very able leader: him they determined to send with as many forces as could on such a sudden be got together, to march

towards the town, and give them a particular account of the matter, applying such remedies, as in his judgment should seem meet. Robert had gone little farther than the castle of Campi, but he was met by a messenger sent from Cæsar, to signify that Bernardo was taken, his consorts slain or fled, and the tumult quieted; whereupon he returned to Florence, whither soon after Bernardo was brought, whom the magistrates strictly examining to know the full truth of the design, and finding it a very weak plot, asked him why he would attempt so unlikely a thing; to which he made answer, he did it, because he had rather die in Florence than live in exile, and was desirous his death might be accompanied with something memorable.

This tumult dead as soon as it was born, the citizens returned to their accustomed manner of living, thinking they might without any moderation or respect enjoy that government they had themselves settled and established: whence arose here those disorders, which, like insects, are usually generated from peace and idleness; for the youth grew more extravagant, than they were wont, in their apparel, feasting, and other lascivious vanities, setting no bounds to their expences, but being wasteful and idle, consumed their time and estates in play and women, and all their study was who drest finest, who had the richest garnitures, and who had most of the words in fashion, or could talk after the prettiest and newest method; but that

man that gave the sharpest, and most biting repartees, he was the wit of the times. These blessed customs, and weighty endowments were by the courtiers of Milan much added to and refined; for that duke with his duchess and whole court, to perform a vow, as it was given out, were come to Florence; where he was received with all that pomp and splendor, requisite for the entertainment of so great a prince, and so true a friend to the city. And now there was one thing to be seen, which our city had never beheld before; for it being the holy time of Lent, during which the church commands abstinence from flesh, his court, without any respect either to God or the church, would feed on nothing else. There were many public spectacles exhibited for his honour, among the rest in the church of Sancto Spirito, they represented the Holy Ghost descending upon the apostles; and many fires being used in such solemnities, that church by some accident or other took fire, and was quite burnt down, which most looked upon, as an evident sign of God's anger against us, for our sins and follies. In short, if the duke of Milan found the city of Florence full of courtezans, delicacies, debaucheries, and customs quite opposite to well ordered civility, he left it much more so; whereupon the good citizens thought it requisite to bridle these vanities, and by a law restrain the excessive expences in apparel, feasting and burials.

In the midst of this profound peace happened a new and unlooked for tumult in Tuscany. There

was found in the country of Volterra, by some of the citizens of that place, a mine of allum, who knowing what advantages were to be made of it, that they might be assisted with money, and defended with authority, they addressed themselves to some citizens of Florence to be partners with them. This in the beginning, as generally all new undertakings are, was by the people of Volterra slighted, but at length when they saw what profit others made of them, they strove too late and in vain to snatch out of their hands, what at first they might with ease have had. They began first in their councils to argue the matter, affirming it was not convenient that a commodity found in public grounds should be converted to private use. They sent thereupon their ambassadors to Florence, and the matter was referred to a committee of citizens, who, either bribed, or because it was indeed their judgment, reported, that the people of Volterra were unjust in desiring to deprive other citizens of the fruits of their pains and industry; and that those allums belonged to the private persons, and not to them; however it was convenient they should yearly pay a sum of money to the city, as an acknowledgement of their superiority. This sentence, instead of extinguishing, inflamed the discontents and tumults in Volterra, and nothing else, not only in their councils but through the whole city, was discoursed of; the people requiring what was unjustly taken from them might be restored, and the private possessors striving to keep

what they had been at charge and pains to set on work, and by sentence of the Florentines was confirmed to them. Infomuch, that in these disputes, Pecorino, a citizen of quality, was killed, and after him many others of his party, and their houses sacked and burnt, and with much ado were the people in this fury restrained from killing the Florentine governors. But this first tumult past, they determined, ere they proceeded farther, to send ambassadors to Florence, who informed the senate, if they would maintain their ancient rights and charters, they would continue in their ancient obedience.

The answer was long debated. Signior Thomas Soderini was of opinion, it was convenient to accept of the Volterrans' submission on what terms soever, it being dangerous to raise a flame so near, that it may burn our own houses; for he was fearful how the pope was inclined, knew the king to be potent, and was confident neither in the Venetians nor duke's friendship, because he could not tell how much fidelity might be found in the one, nor how little courage in the other, remembering them of that known proverb, "Better a lean peace than a fat victory." On the other side, Lorenzo de Medici, thinking now he had an opportunity to give a value to his counsels and prudence, and especially set on by those who envied Soderini's authority, advised the chastising the insolency of the Volterrans by arms, affirming, if they were not made a memorable example, other cities would

never stick at doing the like upon the least and slightest occasion. This resolution taken, the Volterrans were answered, that they could not require the observance of those conditions themselves had broken, and that therefore they must submit themselves to the judgment of the senate, or expect a war. The Volterrans, returned with this answer, prepared for their defence, fortifying their town, and sending to all the princes of Italy for aid, but were hearkened to by few, only the Sanesi and the lord of Piombino promised them some assistance.

The Florentines, on the other side, thinking haste in attaining it of almost as much importance as victory itself, drew together ten thousand foot, and two thousand horse, whom under the command of Frederic, lord of Urbin, they sent into the country of Volterra, and easily becoming master of that, he lays siege to the city, which, being seated upon an ascent, could no way be battered but on that side where the church of St. Alexander stands. The Volterrans had hired about a thousand soldiers for their defence, who seeing how bravely the Florentines assailed them, distrustful of being able to defend the town, grew slow in the service, but in affronting the Volterrans ready enough; so that those poor citizens were forced to endure the assaults of their enemies without, and the abuses of their friends within, till in the end despairing of any safety, they began to treat, and for want of better terms were forced to submit to the discreti-

on of the Florentine commissaries; who, causing the gates to be opened, went to the palace where their priors were sitting, whom they commanded to return to their houses, and in the way one of them was by some of the soldiers in derision stript: from this beginning, as men are still readier to do mischief than good, grew the destruction and sack of this city, which for a whole day was robbed, spoiled and plundered; neither did the women nor sacred places escape, but the soldiers, as well those who had so cowardly defended it, as those that had fought against it, divided all their wealth and riches.

The news of this victory was with great joy received at Florence, and because the enterprize was wholly Lorenzo's, it gained him very great reputation: whereupon one of his familiar friends reproaching Thomas Soderini for his counsels said, "And what say you now that Volterra is taken?" To whom Thomas answered, "I rather think it is lost, for had you taken it upon composition, you might have expected from it both advantage and security; but having taken it by force, in time of war it will weaken and annoy you, and in time of peace be both a charge and trouble."

In these times the pope, desirous to keep in obedience the towns belonging to the church, had caused Spoleto to be sackt, which by the procurement of factions within had rebelled, and afterwards, because the city of Castello was fallen into the same contumacy, had besieged it. Nicolas Vitelli was prince of that town; he had contracted

a very intimate friendship with Lorenzo de Medici, who was not wanting now to give him assistance, though not enough to defend him, yet sufficient, to sow those seeds of dissention between pope Sixtus and the Medici, which afterwards brought forth very ill fruit. Nor had they been so long breaking forth, had not the death of Peter cardinal of Sisto intervened; for this cardinal travelling all about Italy, and particularly to Milan and Venice, under pretence to honour the nuptials of Hercules marquis of Ferrara, had been founding the minds of princes to find how they stood inclined to the Florentines; but being returned to Rome, he died, not without suspicion of having been poisoned by the Venetians; for they feared the power of Sixtus, when it had the courage and counsel of Peter to back it: for though nature had produced him of mean and abject blood, and that afterwards he was educated within the walls of a convent, yet as soon as he came to be cardinal, he was filled with such pride and ambition, a cardinal's cap was so much too little, that the triple crown would scarce have satisfied him: for he made a feast in Rome that might have been judged a prodigality in a king, and which cost him at least twenty thousand florins.

Sixtus deprived thus of his great minister of state, his affairs went on much slower. However the Florentines, duke, and Venetians, having renewed the league, and left place for the pope and king to enter, if they pleased; they made another contract

between themselves with invitations to other princes of Italy to join with them, if they thought fit; so that now Italy was divided into two factions; for every day something happened, begetting hatred and animosity between these two leagues; but particularly the affair of Cyprus, which island the king laid claim to, but the Venetians possessed themselves of; whereupon the pope and king obliged each other to stricter terms of mutual assistance.

Frederic prince of Urbin was at this time accounted one of the prime captains of Italy, who had long been employed by the Florentines: him, that the league might want so valiant a head, the king and pope strove to gain; and the king invited, and the pope advised, him to go to Naples, which to the great wonder and displeasure of the Florentines he did, who believed he exposed himself to the fate of Jacob Piccinino, though the contrary happened; for Frederic returned both from Naples and Rome with much honour, and still continued general of the league. Mean while the king and pope were not wanting to found the minds of the lords of Romania, and the Sanesi, by means of whose friendship they might more securely offend the Florentines; who perceiving their intent, by all convenient ways armed themselves to encounter their ambition; and having lost Frederic of Urbin, entertained Robert of Rimini, renewed their league with the Perugians, and made a new league with the lords of Faenza. The reason alleged by the

king and pope for their hatred to the Florentines was, because they sought to withdraw the Venetians from them, and join them to their own side; and the pope thought that whilst the Venetians and Florentines were united, it would be impossible for him to maintain the reputation of the church; or count Girolamo his estates in Romania. On the other side, the Florentines feared that they would set them at enmity with the Venetians, not for their friendship sake, but to be the better enabled to injure them. And in these doubts and jealousies lived Italy two years before any war or tumult broke out.

The first, though a little one, happened in Tuscany. Braccio a man, as we have before related, famous in war, left behind him two sons, Oddo and Charles: this last very young, and the other slain by the inhabitants of the vale of Lamona. Charles being come to man's estate, and fit for action, was by the Venetians, for the memory of his father and hopes of himself, entertained among other leaders employed by the republic. The time of his entertainment expired, he would not renew it, determining to try, if by his own valour, and the reputation of his father, he could recover his estates of Perugia; to which the Venetians readily consented, they being wont amidst others troubles to increase their own dominions. Charles therefore comes into Tuscany; and finding the affairs of Perugia somewhat too hard, because the Florentines were in league with them, yet resolving, since he

had taken arms, to do something memorable, assaults the Sanesi, alleging they were his debtors for services done that state by his father, which he required satisfaction for, and therewithal so briskly fell on, that he almost quite overthrew that dominion.

The citizens of Siena seeing themselves so furiously assaulted, being apt to believe any ill of the Florentines, persuaded themselves that by their consent the attempt was made, heavily complaining thereof to the pope and king, and sending withal ambassadors to Florence, to expostulate the matter, and privately insinuating that Charles, without hopes of their assistance, durst not so boldly have injured them. The Florentines excused themselves, affirming they were ready to shew their endeavours, to prevent Charles from doing them any wrong; and to that purpose would in such terms, as the ambassadors thought fit, command him to forbear offending the Sanesi; which Charles thought hard measure, demonstrating that the Florentines, by not backing him, had lost a considerable conquest, and robbed him of a proportionable glory, for he could in a short time have promised them the possession of that town, whose cowardize and disorder he had found such, it was impossible they could long hold out. But now being forced to leave off, he returned into the Venetians pay, and the Sanesi, though freed by the Florentines from so many damages, continued their grudge against them, not

thinking they owed any obligation to a people, who had only delivered them from an injury they had first occasioned.

Whilst affairs stood thus between the king, pope, and Tuscany, an accident of greater moment happened in Lombardy, as the presage of future evils. There was one Cola of Mantua, a learned but ambitious man, who taught the Latin tongue to the youth of principal quality in Milan. In these, whether out of hate to the bad manners of the duke, or moved by some other occasion, by all the discourses he made, he strove to beget an abhorrence of living under an evil prince, pronouncing them glorious and happy, to whom fortune and nature had granted the favour of living in a commonwealth, declaring how all famous men had been brought up in republics, and not under princes; for those cherish virtuous men, and these destroy them, the one reaping benefit and advantage from their virtue, and the other standing in fear of it. Those youths he had entertained the strictest familiarity with, were John Andrea Lampognano, Charles Visconti, and Girolamo Olgiato. With these he often discoursed about the corrupt nature of the prince, and the infelicity of those that lived under him; and such a confidence had he in these young men, that at last he made them swear, when age should enable them, they would free their country from the tyranny of that prince. This desire, thus instilled into them, increased with their years; and the duke's ill manners and customs,

and particular injuries done to themselves, hastened the execution of it.

Galeazzo was lustful and cruel, which two qualities had with their circumstances made him utterly odious ; for he was not content only to vitiate and debauch ladies of quality, but took delight to publish it ; nor would the death of men satisfy him, unless they were in some cruel manner tormented. He lived likewise under the infamy of having murdered his mother ; for not thinking himself absolute prince while she was present, he had so far wrought with her, that she was content to retire to her jointure-seat at Cremona, in which journey she fell suddenly sick and died ; which made many think her son the cause of her death. This duke, in some concerns with the female sex, had dishonoured Charles and Girolamo, and denied John Andrea the possession of the abbey of Miramondo, which upon a relation's resignation had been granted him by the pope.

These private injuries spurred on the young men to revenge, and deliver their country from so many mischiefs, hoping that whenever they had the good fortune to kill the duke, they should not only be followed by the chief of the nobles, but by the whole people. Being therefore determined upon the matter, they met often together, which, because of their ancient familiarity, was nothing wondered at ; and to keep their minds steady and resolved, they were always discoursing of the business,

and practising with their dagger sheaths to hit one another on the breast, belly, and in other mortal places. Then they advised about the place and time: in the castle they judged it could not be securely done; whilst he was a hunting, uncertain and dangerous; in his walks of pleasure they guessed it would prove hard and unsuccessful, and at feasts doubtful; wherefore they determined to fall on him at some public pomp and solemnity, where they were certain he would be present, and they with least suspicion might assemble their friends, concluding that if any of them were in the execution taken, the rest should kill him in the midst of their enemies.

It was now the year fourteen hundred and seventy six, and nigh unto Christmas; and because the prince was accustomed in great pomp upon St. Stephen's day, to visit the church of that martyr, they resolved on that as the time and place for putting their design in execution; and on the morning of that saint's day, caused several of their trusty friends and servants to arm themselves, pretending to go and assist John Andrea, who, against the mind of some envious neighbours, had a desire to carry water into his lands; and them thus armed they brought to the church, alleging that before their departure, they would take leave of the prince. They likewise assembled thither, under divers pretences, several other of their friends and relations, hoping the principal deed being once done, every one would be ready to join in what remained, and

their intent was, as soon as the prince was slain, to join with those armed men, and go to that place of the city, where they might with most ease raise the people, and persuade them to arm themselves against the dukes, and the chiefest of the court, hoping the people, by reason of the famine wherewith they were oppressed, would be ready to follow them; resolving for an encouragement to give them the spoil of the houses of Cecco Simonetta, John Botti, and Francis Luconi chief ministers of state.

This determination made, and the execution firmly resolved in their minds, John Andrea with his companions came early to the church, where they heard mass together; after which, John Andrea turning towards an image of St. Ambrose, said; "O thou guardian and patron of our city, thou knowest our intention, and the end why we adventure our selves into so many dangers: be propitious to our undertakings, and by favouring justice make it appear how much injustice displeaseth thee." To the duke, on the other side, before he came to church, happened many things to prognosticate his approaching death; for in the morning when he rose, he put on, according to his usual custom, his privy armour, which presently after, either because he thought it not becoming, or that it hurt his body, he put off: then he had a mind to hear mass in the castle, but his chaplain was already gone to St. Stephen's with all the furniture of the chapel: then he would

have had the bishop of Como say mass in his stead, but he alleged certain reasonable impediments; so that constrained as it were by necessity, he resolved to go to church. But first he called for his two sons, John Galeazzo and Hermes, whom he embraced and kissed many times, as if he had no power to depart from them.

The conspirators in the mean time, both to lessen all suspicion, and shelter themselves from the cold, which was then very violent, were retired in a chamber of the chief priest of the church, their friend, till upon word brought, that the duke was coming, they went forth into the church, and John Andrea and Girolamo placed themselves on the right hand, at the entrance into the church, and Charles Visconti on the left. Those that preceded the duke were all gone in, and he just upon entrance, encompassed with a great multitude, as in such a ducal pomp was convenient. The first that moved towards him were Lampognano and Girolamo: these pretending to make room for the duke, came up close to him, and assaulted him with sharp and short daggers they had in their sleeves. Lampognano gave him two wounds, one in the belly, and the other in the throat; Girolamo likewise wounded him in the throat and the breast. Charles Visconti having taken his stand near the door, so that the duke was past him ere he was set upon by his companions, could not reach to wound him before, but gave him two stabs into the back and shoulder: so quick and sudden were these six wounds given,

that the duke was fallen before any man perceived it, nor could he do or say any thing that was known, save only as he fell, he once cried out, "O Lady, help me".

The duke fallen, the noise and clamour was great; many swords were drawn, and as it usually happens in such unlooked for cases, many run out of the church, and many run towards the tumult, without knowing any certainty of the matter. But those that were nearest to the duke, and had seen him slain, knowing his murderers, pursued them; and of the conspirators, John Andrea, endeavoring to get out of the church, went among the women, who being many, and as the custom was, set on the ground, he was so entangled by their coats, that by a moor one of the duke's footmen, he was overtaken and slain: Charles was likewise slain by the standers by; but Girolamo Olgiato escaped out among the croud; and seeing his companions slain, and not knowing whither to fly went home, where neither his father nor brothers would receive him; but his mother, having compassion of her son, recommended him to a priest, an ancient friend of their family; who putting him in his friars weeds, conveyed him to his house, where he staid two days, not without hopes that there might some tumult be raised in Milan, whereby he might be saved: but that not coming to pass, and fearing to be found there, he attempted to fly in disguise; but being known he was brought before the magistrate, where he declared the whole order of the conspi-

racy. Girolamo was about three and twenty years of age, nor was he less resolute in suffering, than he had been in acting; for whilst he stood naked, and the hangman before him with his knife in his hand ready to cut him in pieces, he spoke these latin words, for he was learned, *Mors acerba, fama perpetua, stabit vetus memoria facti.* This attempt of these unhappy young men was closely contrived, and resolutely executed; and the occasion of their ruin was their not being followed, or defended by those they trusted would have done it. Let princes therefore learn to live in such a manner, and gain so much love and reverence, that none can hope for safety that kills them: and let private persons know how vain the imagination is, to believe the multitude, though they are discontented, will in danger follow or accompany them. This accident amazed all Italy; but those which soon after happened in Florence did much more terrify it; by which the peace which had continued twelve years was broke; as in the next book shall be set down; which as it begins with blood and horror, so it ends with sorrow and tears.

BOOK VIII.

THE beginning of this eighth book being placed in midst of two conspiracies, one in Milan already related, the other happening in Florence, and now to be told; it might seem convenient, pursuant to the method begun, to discourse something concerning the nature of conspiracies, and the importance of them: which I would willingly do, if I had not before spoken concerning them, or it were a matter to be briefly passed over. But since it both requireth great consideration, and something has already been elsewhere said concerning it, I forbear any further mention thereof, and proceed to relate; that as the house of the Medici had overcome all those enemies, which openly had opposed them; so to complete to themselves and family, the sole and ample authority over the city, it was likewise requisite they should oppress all those who secretly plotted against them; for whilst they contended with authority equalled by any other families, those citizens, who envied their greatness, might openly oppose them without fear of being oppressed in the beginning of their attempts; for as long as the magi-

strates were free, neither faction, till they had lost the day, had any occasion of fear. But after the victory in fourteen hundred and sixty six, the government was so closely grasped by the Medici, and they assumed so great authority, that if any were discontented, they were forced either patiently to submit to the government under which they lived, or else privately, and by way of conspiracy, attempt a remedy. Which plots seldom succeed, begetting for the most part ruin to those who form them, and greatness to those against whom they are contrived; so that any prince or lord of a city, being by conspiracy assaulted, if he be not like the duke of Milan, which rarely happens, slain, becomes more powerful than before, and oft-times from a good man turns wicked: for these private plots create occasion of fear, fear seeks security, and the search of security produces injury of others, which is the common mother of hatred, and oftentimes of his own destruction; and thus indeed treasons are the immediate destroyers of those that contrive them, and one way or other in conclusion offend him against whom they are contrived.

Italy was, as we have before related, divided into two factions: the pope and king of one party, and the Venetians, duke, and Florentines on the other. And though war was not kindled amongst them, yet every day brought forth new blasts to blow the coals; and the pope especially, in all his actions and enterprises, studied to affront the state of Florence. For Philip de Medici, archbishop of Pisa,

about that time dying, the pope, contrary to the will of the senate of Florence, invested Francis Salviati, whom he knew to be an enemy to the house of Medici, with that archbishopric; to whom the senate refusing to give possession, there sprung up new, and more grievous offences, by reason of the contest between the pope and that state. Besides in Rome his holiness conferred many favours on the family of the Pazzi, and upon all occasions discountenanced the Medici.

The Pazzi, in those times, both for riches and honour, lived in as much splendor as any family in Florence, the head of whom was signior Jacob, who for his riches and nobility was by the people made knight. He had no children, but one natural daughter; but he had many nephews, sons of signior Peter and Antony his brothers; the chief of whom were William, Francis, Rinate and John; and after them, Andrew, Nicolas and Galeatto. Cosmo de Medici, observing their riches and glory, had married his niece Biancha to William, hoping by this alliance to keep the families more united, and remove that enmity and hatred, which are the usual products of envy and jealousy; yet, so fallacious and uncertain are the contrivances of man, matters fell out quite otherwise; for those, who counselled Lorenzo, insinuated how it was dangerous and destructive to his authority, to suffer any citizens to heap up riches and honours; whence it happened that signior Jacob and his nephews were

not advanced to those degrees of honour that other citizens thought they had deserved. Hence also sprung the first anger in the Pazzi, and fear in the Medici, and the one increasing, afforded matter and growth to the other; for the Pazzi in all debates to which the other citizens assembled, were not kindly hearkened to by the magistrates; and the council of Eight, Francis Pazzi happening to be at Rome, upon a slight occasion, and without observing the respect due to citizens of his quality, constrained him to return to Florence; which made the Pazzi in all places rip up their grievances with bitter and vehement reproaches, and those increased the others jealousies, and added to their own injury.

John Pazzi had married the daughter of John Borromei a very rich man, whose estate, he dying without issue male, fell by right to his daughter. However Charles his nephew possessed himself of part of his goods; and the cause coming to a trial, a law was made, disinheriting John Pazzi's wife, and giving the estate to Charles; which injustice the Pazzi wholly imputed to the Medici: about which Julian many times complained to his brother Lorenzo, telling him he was doubtful, lest by grasping too much, they should lose all; but Lorenzo, warm in youth and authority, would take all things on himself, and was ambitious, that men should know they were done by him.

The Pazzi with so great riches, and such nobility, incapable of suffering so many injuries, began to consult how they might revenge themselves. The

first, that made a motion against the Medici, was Francis, who more sensible, and withal more courageous than the rest, resolved to attain what he wanted, or lose what he had ; and because he hated the government of Florence, he lived for the most part in Rome, where, according to the custom of the Florentine merchants, he drove a great trade, and had a mighty stock of money ; and earl Girolamo being his intimate friend, they often made mutual complaints of the Medici ; insomuch that after many consultations, they at length concluded that ere the one could be secure in his estate, or the other in his city, there was an absolute necessity of changing the government of Florence, which they could contrive no way to effect, but by the death of Lorenzo and Julian. They supposed the pope and king would easily consent, if the facility of accomplishing it were declared to them. Having formed these imaginations in their heads, they communicated them to Francis Salviati archbishop of Pisa, who being ambitious, and lately injured by the Medici, readily joined with them ; and examining among themselves what was fit to be done, they determined, to add the greater facility to the enterprize, to gain signior Jacob Pazzi to their party. Whereupon they thought it convenient that Francis Pazzi should to this intent go to Florence, and the archbishop and earl stay at Rome to sollicite the pope, when there should be occasion.

Francis, being come to Florence, found signior

Jacob more reserved, and difficult to be persuaded, than he could have wished him; whereof giving advice to Rome, it was judged fit to employ some greater authority to dispose him; to which end, the archbishop and earl communicated the whole design to John Battista of Montesecco the pope's general. He was a very famous captain, and much obliged to the pope and earl, yet he disliked the plot as difficult and dangerous; which danger and difficulties the archbishop endeavoured to remove, by telling him what assistance the pope and king would give to the enterprise, adding withal the hate born by the citizens of Florence to the Medici, the numerous kindred of the Salviati and Pazzi, and the easiness of killing them as they were walking the city without any guard or any suspicion; which done, the change of government would follow of course; all which John Battista gave no intire credit to, having heard many Florentines affirm the contrary.

Whilst they were laying these plots and contrivances, it happened that Charles lord of Faenza fell so sick, that there were little hopes of his recovery. The archbishop and earl thought they had now an opportunity to send John Battista to Florence, and thence into Romania, under pretence of regaining certain towns possessed by the lord of Faenza. The earl therefore gave commission to John Battista to confer with Lorenzo, and in his name desire his advice in the management of the affairs of Romania; and that afterwards he should

consult with Francis Pazzi, and both together endeavour to dispose signior Jacob to their party; and to the end he might be backed with the pope's authority, they procured him before his departure audience from his holiness, who engaged with all power to further the design. John Battista, being arrived at Florence, addressed himself to Lorenzo, by whom he was courteously received, and in all his demands prudently and friendly advised; at which John Battista was somewhat amazed, finding him a man quite different from what he had been represented; for he perceived him to be courteous, discreet, and a great friend of the earl's: however he would speak with Francis, but not finding him, for he was gone to Lucca, he went himself to signior Jacob, and at first found him very averse to the design, but before they parted, somewhat moved with the pope's authority, he told John Battista that he should go to Romania, and by that time he returned, Francis would be come to Florence, and then they would discourse the matter at large.

John Battista went and returned, and still continued to entertain Lorenzo with his feigned commission from the earl; and afterwards held divers conferences with Francis, and signior Jacob, whom at length they prevailed with so far, that he consented to the conspiracy. Then they began to consult of the execution. Signior Jacob thought it impossible whilst both brothers were in Florence, and therefore advised to stay till Lorenzo went to Rome,

whither there was a report he was designed. Francis would have been glad to have had Lorenzo at Rome; however supposing he did not go, he affirmed that either at a wedding, at some public sports, or in the church, both brothers might be slain; and as to foreign aid, in his judgment the pope might draw together an army, under pretence of assaulting the castle of Montone, which he had a just occasion to take from earl Charles, for having raised the tumults before mentioned in the country of Siena and Perugia; yet they made no farther conclusion, save that Francis de Pazzi, and John Battista should go to Rome, and there with the pope and earl determine all things.

The matter was afresh debated at Rome, and in the end it was concluded, an expedition against Montone being resolved, that John Francis of Tolentino, a captain of the pope's, should go into Romania, and Lorenzo of Castello into his own country, and both keep their forces in a readiness to observe such orders, as they should receive from the archbishop Salviati, and Francis Pazzi, who together with John Battista of Montefecco should come to Florence, where they should make provision of all things necessary to put their design in execution, to which king Ferdinand had by his ambassadors promised his assistance. The archbishop and Francis, being come to Florence, drew into their party, Jacob the son of signior Poggio, a young man of excellent learning, but ambitious, and desirous of novelty; they likewise engaged the

two Jacob Salviati's, the one brother, the other kinsman to the archbishop; to them they added Bernardo Bandini, and Napoleone Francesi, stout young men, and who had been often obliged by the Pazzi. Of strangers, besides those before named, there were joined with them signior Antonio de Volterra, and one Stephen a priest, who taught the Latin tongue to Jacob de Pazzi's daughter. Renate de Pazzi, a prudent and grave man, and who very well knew the ill consequences of such undertakings, not only refused to join in the conspiracy, but detested it, and by all honest means he could sought to prevent it.

The pope had in the university of Pisa caused to be educated in the study of the cannon laws, Raphael de Riario, nephew to earl Girolamo, and whilst he was yet there, had advanced him to the dignity of cardinal. The conspirators thought convenient to bring this cardinal to Florence, not only the better to conceal the plot, as designing in his house to hide those conspirators they had occasion of, but likewise to gain a fitter opportunity of executing it. The cardinal therefore coming, was by signior Jacob de Pazzi entertained at Montughi, his country-house near Florence. The conspirators by his means had designed to get Lorenzo and Julian together, and the first time that happened to kill them: they therefore contrived, they should invite the cardinal to their own house at Fiesole, whither Julian by chance, or of purpose came not, so that appointment failed; then they determined

he should invite them at Florence, whither they could not chuse but both come, and appointed the feast on Sunday the twenty sixth of April fourteen hundred and seventy eight. The conspirators hoping they might find means to murder them at this feast, met together on Saturday night, and ordered all things they thought fit for the execution next day; but in the morning Francis Pazzi had intelligence that Julian would not come to the feast; whereupon the conspirators assembled and concluded, that the execution must not be longer delayed, for that it was impossible, being known to so many, but it would be discovered. Wherefore they resolved to murder them in the cathedral church of Sancta Reparata; whither the cardinal going, the two brothers would, according to custom, attend him. They assigned to John Battista the charge of killing Lorenzo, and Francis Pazzi, and Bernardo Bandini, were to murder Julian. John Battista refused the office: for whether the familiarity he had had with Lorenzo had softened his mind, or whether moved by some other reason, he told them he durst not commit such a villany in the church, and add sacrilege to treason. This was the first step to the ruin of their design; for straitened by time, they were constrained to give the charge to Antonio of Volterra, and Stephen the priest, two, whose nature and experience rendered them unfit for it; for no action requires more resolution and settled courage than this, and he who undertakes any thing of this kind, ought to be a man experienced in

blood and slaughter, it having oftentimes been seen that men, though trained up in arms, and at all times else courageous, have had their hearts fail upon such attempts. However this resolution held, and they agreed that the signal to fall on, should be when the priest at the high altar began to sing mass, and that at the same time the archbishop Salviati, with Giacopo Poggio, should seize on the public palace, to the intent the senate might be brought, as soon as the two young men were slain, either voluntarily, or by force, to favour their design.

Thus determined, they went to the church, whether the cardinal with Lorenzo Medici were already gone. The church was full of people, and divine service begun, but Julian Medici, not yet come; whereupon Francis Pazzi, together with Bernardo, who were appointed to murder him, went home to find him, and by cunning flattery and artifices persuaded him to come to church. It is a thing notoriously memorable how such inveterate hatred, accompanied with the thoughts of so detestable a villany, could with such undauntedness of mind, and obstinacy of spirit, be concealed in Francis and Bernardo; for all the way as they conducted him, and in the church, they entertained him with pleasant and youthful discourse. Nor did Francis forbear out of a pretence of kindness and familiarity, to take Julian in his arms, embracing and pressing his body, to find out if he had any privy armour. Julian and Lorenzo were both sensible of the hate

the Pazzi bore them, and how they desired to take away their authority in the state, but they did not fear their lives, believing when they did attempt any thing they would do it civilly, and not with such extremity of violence, and therefore free from any such mistrust, they took so little care of themselves, that they always entertained them with all manner of friendliness. The murderers thus prepared, those appointed to assassinate Lorenzo, thrust up close to him, which, by reason of the croud, they might easily do without suspicion, and the others did the like to Julian; when the time appointed being come, Bernardo Bandini, with a short dagger prepared for the purpose, stabs Julian in the breast, who advancing two or three steps fell to the ground, and Francis Pazzi throwing himself upon him, loaded him with wounds, and was so eager in the villany, that, blinded with rage and fury, he gave himself a desperate wound in the leg. Signior Antonio and Friar Stephen on the other side fell upon Lorenzo, but though they made many strokes at him, they gave him only a slight wound in the throat; for either through their cowardise, or Lorenzo's courage, who seeing himself thus assaulted, bravely with his sword defended himself, their attempt was frustrated, and he by the assistance of those about him saved from further harm: whereat dismayed they fled and hid themselves, but were afterwards found out, shamefully put to death, and dragged through the city.

Lorenzo in the mean while retired into the vestry of the church with those friends he had about him, and there shut themselves in. Bernardo Bandini seeing Julian dead, slew likewise Francis Neri, a great friend of the Medici, either out of some old grudge, or because he had endeavoured to save Julian; and not content with these two murders, he ran to seek out Lorenzo, to supply, with his courage and activity, the sloth and cowardise of the others; but finding him shut up in the vestry, failed of his intent. In the midst of this dreadful and villanous accident, the terror of which made most men think the church was falling on their heads, the cardinal retired to the altar, where with great difficulty he was saved by the priests, till by the senate's order, when the tumult was ceased, he was conveyed to his palace, where in great fear he remained till his delivery.

There was at this time in Florence some Perugians driven from their habitations by the factions, enemies to their families, whom the Pazzi, upon promise to restore them to their country, had drawn into the conspiracy. These the archbishop Salviati, who, together with Jacob Peggio, the two Salviati, and other friends, was gone to possess himself of the palace, took along with him, and being come to the palace, left some of his men below with orders, that when they heard a noise, they should seize on the gates; and himself with the greatest part of the Perugians, went up, where finding the senate at dinner, for it was late, he was

presently by Caesar Petrucci Gonfalonier of justice, admitted. Whereupon entering with a few, and leaving the remainder without, they of their own accord shut themselves into the chancery, whose lock was so contrived, that without the key, it could not be opened, neither on the inside, nor without. The archbishop mean while being gone in with the Gonfalonier, under pretence of having some matter to confer with him from the pope, began to utter some broken and discomposed words: insomuch, that his fearful speech, and change of his countenance bred such a suspicion in the Gonfalonier, that with a great cry he thrust him out; and finding there Jacob Poggio, took him by the hair, and delivered him into the hands of the sergeants; and the whole senate taking the alarm, with such arms as came next to hand, fell upon the rest that were come up with the archbishop, and, part of them being shut up, and part terrified and dismayed, soon dispatched them all, or threw them alive out of the palace windows: of whom the archbishop, the two Jacob Salviati's, and Jacob Poggio, were hanged. Those, who remained below in the palace, had forced the guards and the gate, and possessed themselves of all the lower rooms, so that the citizens, who in this tumult ran to the palace, could neither with their arms assist, nor with their counsel, advise the senators.

¶ Mean while Francis Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini seeing Lorenzo escaped, and one of themselves, in whom the main hopes of the enterprise lay, griev-

ously wounded, were daunted. And Bernardo, with the same activity of spirit, wherewith he had assaulted the Medici, begins to consider of his own safety, and seeing all lost flies to save himself. Francis, being returned to his house, made trial if he could sit on horseback ; for the orders were, that he with some men at arms should ride about the town, and call the people to liberty and arms, but he could not, so dangerous was his wound, and so much blood he had lost ; wherefore putting off his clothes, he laid himself in his naked bed, desiring signior Jacob to do that which he himself could not. Signior Jacob, though old and unused to these tumults, yet to make this last trial of his fortune, mounted on horseback, with about an hundred armed men prepared before for that purpose, and goes into the Piazza of the palace, calling the people to his assistance, and proclaiming liberty. But because the first were by the fortune and liberality of the Medici made deaf, and the other was no otherwise desired in Florence than enjoyed, no one answered him ; only the senate, who still kept in the upper part of the palace, saluted him with stones, and with the deepest threatenings they could devise, terrified him. Signior Jacob upon this being in suspense what to do, was met by John Soristeri his brother-in-law, who, reproving him for being the occasion of these tumults, exhorted him to return to his house, assuring him that the welfare of the people and liberty of the city concerned

other citizens as well as himself. Wherefore despairing of any help, seeing Lorenzo his enemy alive, Francis wounded, and himself not followed by any, not knowing what other course to take, he resolved, if it were possible, by flight to save his life, and to that end with the company he had with him in the Piazza, takes his way out of Florence towards Romania.

By this time all the city was up in arms, and Lorenzo de Medici was, accompanied with many armed men, come to his own house: the people had likewise recovered the palace, and killed or taken all those that possessed it. And now the name of Medici was proclaimed through every street, and the quarters of the dead, either fixed upon their weapons points, or dragged through the streets; and every one with words full of rage, and actions as cruel, persecuted the Pazzi: already had the people entered their houses, and naked as he was drawn Francis out, whom having dragged to the palace, they hanged up with the archbishop, and the rest. Yet all the injuries and affronts done him, either in the way, or afterwards, could not extract one word from him, but fixedly looking upon every one, without so much as a groan, he died. William Pazzi, as well for his own innocence, as for the sake of his wife Bianca, was saved in his brother-in-law Lorenzo's palace. There was not a citizen in this terrible necessity, but either armed or disarmed, went to Lorenzo's house, offering him their lives and fortunes, So great was

the love and favour that house had by their prudence and liberality gained !

Rinato Pazzi was, when this villany was done, retired into his house in the country, where hearing the news, he would have fled in disguise; but by the way was known, taken, and brought back to Florence. Signior Jacob was likewise taken passing the mountains; but those mountaineers having notice of what past at Florence, suspecting him because of his flight, set upon him and brought him back; nor could he obtain the favour, though he often begged it, to be killed by them on the way. Signior Jacob and Rinato were adjudged to die four days after the action, and in all those executions which in that interval happened, and which had covered the streets with the carcases and quarters of men, none was observed to be pitied, or to touch any man with the least compassion, but Rinato, for he was esteemed a good and a prudent man, and not observed to be tainted with that pride which infected the rest of his family.

And now because the prosecution of these conspirators should be in all points exemplary, signior Jacob Pazzi was first taken out of the tomb of his ancestors, and as one excommunicated, buried under the city walls; his body was again dug up, and with the same halter, in which he was hanged, dragged naked through the streets, and, since he could not on earth find a quiet sepulchre, was by those that thus dragged him thrown into the river

Arno, whose waters were then very high. A great example of the fickleness of fortune, to see a man of such riches and of so happy an estate, fall with so much infelicity, ruin and disgrace! Some have reported him very vicious, as addicted to gaming and swearing, like one desperate and careless. If it were so, he recompensed those vices with his liberality and alms, for he relieved many poor, and gave large donatives to pious structures. And this one good thing may be said of him, that the Saturday preceding the day appointed for this cruel murder, that none might be sharers in his misfortune, he paid all his debts, and all the merchandise he had either in the custom-house, or at home, belonging to others, with wonderful care he caused to be delivered to the owners. John Battista de Montelecco, after many tedious examinations, was beheaded. Napoleone Francesi by flight escaped punishment. William Pazzi was confined, and all his kinsmen that remained alive imprisoned in the dungeon of the castle of Volterra.

All tumults appeased, and the conspirators punished, the funerals of Julian were celebrated, which were accompanied with the tears of all the citizens; for indeed he was a man endowed with all that winning affability, courtesy and liberality that could be wished or desired in one of his degree and condition. There remained of him one son, born some few months after his death, and called Julio, who is endowed with that virtue and fortune, which all the world at present knows, and which

when I come to the occurrences of these times, shall, God granting me life, fully set forth. Those forces under signior Lorenzo de Castello in the vale of Tevere, and those under John Francisco Tolentino in Romania, were both advancing at the same time towards Florence, in favour of the Pazzi; till understanding how the design had miscarried, they returned back. But since that change of government in Florence designed by the king and pope had not succeeded, they determined that what they could not effect by conspiracies, they would by open war; and both one and the other with all possible speed drew together their forces to assault the state of Florence, declaring that all they desired of that city was the removal of Lorenzo de Medici, who only of all the Florentines was their enemy. The king's forces had already passed the Tronto, and the pope's were in the country of Perugia, who, that he might make the Florentines feel the smart of spiritual as well as temporal wounds, excommunicates and curses them. Whereupon the Florentines, seeing so many several forces moving against them, prepared with all diligence for their defence, and Lorenzo de Medici, since public fame reported that the war was made only against him, assembles in the palace of the lords all the citizens of quality, to the number of above three hundred, to whom he spake in this manner.

“ I know not, most mighty lords and right worshipful citizens! whether I ought to grieve

“ or rejoice at what is lately happened; for when
 “ I consider with how much fraud and deceit, with
 “ how much malice and hatred I was assaulted,
 “ and my brother slain, I cannot but be concern-
 “ ed for my self, and with all my heart, and with
 “ all my soul, grieve for him: but when I con-
 “ sider with what active readiness, with what faith-
 “ ful diligence, with what intire love, and uni-
 “ versal consent, you have revenged my brother,
 “ and defended me, I cannot but rejoice; nay, I
 “ find myself exalted in my spirits, and glory in
 “ my fortune. For if this experience has let me
 “ know I had more enemies in this city than I
 “ thought; it has likewise taught me, that I have
 “ more fervent and faithful friends than I believed.
 “ I must therefore condole with you for the in-
 “ juries of others, and rejoice for your kindness:
 “ yet ought my sorrow to be the greater, as the
 “ injuries received, are so rare, so without example,
 “ and so little by us deserved. Consider, most
 “ worthy citizens! to what extremities the per-
 “ verseness of fortune has reduced our house, that
 “ the being encompassed with friends in the midst
 “ of our kindred, no, not the church itself, can
 “ secure us. Those, who are in fear of death,
 “ use to run to their friends for assistance, to their
 “ kindred for protection; but we, alas! find ours
 “ armed for our destruction. Those, who either
 “ on public or private accounts are persecuted, use
 “ to flee to the church for sanctuary; but where o-
 “ thers are defended, we are slain. Where parricides

“ and assassines are secure, the Medici meet their
“ murderers. But God, who hath hitherto never
“ forsaken our house, hath now preserved us, and
“ undertaken the defence of our just cause. For
“ what injury have we ever done to create in any
“ man so fierce a desire of revenge? these very men
“ who have persecuted us with such malice, we
“ never so much as privately offended; for had we
“ injured them, they could never have had the
“ opportunity thus to injure us. And when they
“ attribute to us public injuries, if ever any were
“ done them, which I know not of, they offend
“ you more than us; and this palace, and the
“ majesty of this government, rather than our
“ house, by imagining that you, for our sakes,
“ undeservedly oppress your citizens; which is a
“ suggestion utterly alien to truth; for we, if we
“ could, and you, if we would, had never con-
“ sented to it; for whoever searches into the truth,
“ will find that our house, for no other cause, has
“ with such general consent been advanced by you,
“ but only that we have still endeavoured with li-
“ berality and kindness to overcome all men. If
“ we then have been honourers of strangers, how
“ should we be injurers of our kindred? if desire
“ of rule moved them to this, as their seizing the
“ palace, and coming armed into the Piazza suf-
“ ficiently evidences, the more wicked, ambiti-
“ ous, and damnable the occasion is, the more it
“ discovers and condemns itself. If out of envy
“ and hatred to our authority they had done it,

“ they offend not us, but you that gave it: but
 “ surely that authority merits hate which men u-
 “ surp, not what they gain by liberality, humanity,
 “ and magnificence. And you well know our
 “ house never mounted to any degree of honour,
 “ but by the order of this magistracy, and your
 “ universal consent. My grandfather Cosmo re-
 “ turned not from banishment by arms or violence,
 “ but your general and united vote. My father
 “ when old and infirm defended not himself from
 “ so many enemies of the state, but you with your
 “ good will and authority defended him. Nor
 “ could I after my father’s death, being as it were
 “ but a child, have maintained the honour of my
 “ family, had it not been supported by your favour
 “ and counsel. Never could those of my family
 “ have governed the republic, had not you with
 “ them governed, as you do still govern it. I
 “ cannot therefore imagine what reason they have
 “ to hate us, or whence their malice sprung? let
 “ them envy their own ancestors, who with pride
 “ and avarice lost that reputation, which ours with
 “ quite different qualities have known how to gain.
 “ But grant that we have done them mighty in-
 “ juries, and they had reason to prosecute our
 “ ruin: yet why should they offend this palace?
 “ why enter into a league with the king and pope
 “ against the liberty of this republic? why disturb
 “ the settled peace of Italy? in this they are with-
 “ out excuse; for they ought to offend those who
 “ have offended them, and not confound private

“ enmities with public injuries; whereby though
 “ their malice be stopt, our miseries are revived,
 “ the pope and king, upon their sole account,
 “ coming to invade us. Which war they say is
 “ made against me and my family: I wish to God
 “ it were true, then the remedy were both ready
 “ and certain; for I will never be so ill a citizen,
 “ to value more my own safety, than your danger;
 “ much rather should I quench your flames with
 “ my own ruin. But because injuries done by the
 “ mighty, are always covered with some more
 “ seemly pretence, they have chosen this veil to
 “ cover their present injustice: but if you think
 “ otherwise, I am in your hands, you may sup-
 “ port, or you may suppress me, you, my fathers,
 “ you my defenders, for what ever you shall com-
 “ mand, I shall readily obey; nor will I refuse,
 “ if you shall think fit, to end this war with my
 “ own, which was begun with my brother’s
 “ blood.”

The citizens, while Lorenzo spoke, could not
 refrain from tears, and with the same compassion
 he was heard, he was, by one commissioned there-
 unto, answered: telling him, “ that the city ac-
 “ knowleged the merits of him and his, to be such,
 “ that he might rest assured, that with the same
 “ readiness and affection wherewith they had re-
 “ venged his brother, and defended him, they
 “ would still preserve his life and reputation, nor
 “ should he lose either, till they had lost their
 “ country.” And to make their actions correspond

with their words, they ordered, for his guard, a certain number of soldiers, to be maintained by the public, to defend him against domestic treasons; then they gave directions for the war, levying men and raising money, as far as their power in either would extend. By virtue of their league, they sent likewise to the duke and Venetians for aid. And since the pope had proved himself a wolf, and not a shepherd, that they might not as guilty be devoured, with the best declarations they could invent, they justified their cause, filling all Italy with accounts of the treasons practised against their state: setting forth the impiety and injustice of the pope, who having by unlawful means usurped the papacy, with malice exercised it; for he had not only sent one, by him advanced to the chief prelatical dignity, in the company of traitors and parricides, to commit such a murder in the church, in the midst of divine service, and at the instant of the celebration of the most holy sacrament; but afterwards, since his design of murdering their citizens, changing their government, and sacking their city at pleasure had not succeeded, he had excommunicated, and with papal maledictions threatened and oppressed them: but if God were just, who hated violence, he would certainly manifest his displeasure against this his vicar, and right their wrongs, who, having no other refuge, had recourse unto him. But so far were the Florentines from receiving this interdiction or obeying it, that they forced the priests to celebrate divine service. They like-

wife summoned a council in Florence of all the prelates in Tuscany under their dominion ; wherein they appealed from the unjust sentence of the pope, to the next general council. Nor did the pope want reasons to justify his cause, alleging, that it appertained to a true pastor of the church to extirpate tyranny, depress the wicked, and exalt the good, and that it belonged not to the secular power to imprison cardinals, hang bishops, kill, quarter, and drag through the streets, priests without any distinction, slaying the innocent and the guilty.

Notwithstanding so many quarrels, and accusations, the cardinal, whom the Florentines had in their custody, was delivered up to the pope ; whereupon he without any fear or respect, with all his and the king's forces assailed them : and the two armies, one under Alphonso, eldest son of Ferdinand duke of Calabria, and the other under Frederic earl of Urbin, being entered Chianti by the way of Siena, which sided with the enemy, took Radda, and several other castles, and wasted all the country ; which done, they encamped before Castellina.

The Florentines, beholding that fierce invasion, were in great fear, being destitute of men, and help from their friends coming slowly ; for though the duke sent some succours, the Venetians did not think themselves obliged to aid the Florentines in a private quarrel ; for private differences were not to be publicly defended. Wherefore the Florentines,

to dispose the Venetians to juster thoughts, sent Thomas Soderini ambassador to that senate, and in the mean time hired soldiers, making Hercules marquis of Ferrara their general. Whilst they were making these preparations, the enemies army so closely streightened Castellina, that the townsmen despairing of any relief, after forty days siege yielded. Thence the enemy turned towards Arezzo, and encamped before Monte St. Sovino. By this time the Florentine army was in a readiness, and advancing towards the enemy, took their station within three miles of them, and so much incommoded them, that Frederic of Urbin desired truce for some few days, which was granted so much to the Florentines disadvantage, that those who asked it wondered; for had they not obtained it, they must have been forced to depart with shame and dishonour; but having so many days to put themselves in order, no sooner was the truce expired, but they took the castle before the Florentines faces. However winter now coming on, for the better conveniency of quarters, the enemy retreated into the country of Siena, and the Florentines likewise withdrew into the most commodious stations; the marquis of Ferrara, having done little good for himself, and less for others, returned to his own country.

About this time Genoa rebelled from the state of Milan upon these occasions. After the death of Galeazzo, John his son being of an age unfit for government, there arose contention between Sforza,

Lewis, Octavian, and Ascanius, his uncles, and the lady Bona his mother; for every one of them would have the tuition of the young duke. In which controversy the lady Bona the old duchess, by the advice of Thomas Soderini then ambassador there for the state of Florence, and Cecco Simonetto who had been secretary to Galeazzo, got the better; whereupon the Sforzi flying from Milan, Octavian passing the Adda was drowned, and the others were confined to several places, together with Robert lord of San Severino, who during those troubles had deserted the duchess, and joined with them. Afterwards those wars happening in Tuscany, hoping by new accidents to meet with new fortunes, they broke their confinements, and each attempted new exploits, to restore themselves to their lost honours. King Alphonso perceiving that the Florentines were, in all their necessity, assisted only by the state of Milan, to deprive them likewise of that support, contrived to give the duchess so much trouble in her own estates, that she could not provide for the Florentines: and by means of Prospero Adorni, the lord Robert, and the rebels Sforzi, caused Genoa to rebel against the duke. There remained only faithful to him the little castle; relying on which, the duchess sent a considerable force to recover the city; but they being defeated, and she seeing the danger hanging over her sons estates and herself, Tuscany being in the utmost confusion, and the Florentines on whom

alone she relied, in distress, she determined, since she could not gain Genoa her subject, to recover it her friend, and agreed with Battistino Fregoso enemy to the Adorni, to give him the little castle, and make him prince of Genoa, on condition he would drive out the Adorni, and not favour the rebels Sforzi.

Battistino with the help of the little castle, and his faction, becomes master of Genoa, and according to their custom makes himself Doge; so that the Sforzi and lord Robert, chased out of Genoa, came with their adherents and followers into Lunigiana. Whereupon the king, seeing the troubles of Lombardy were composed, took occasion from these out-casts of Genoa to disturb Tuscany towards Pisa, that the Florentines, dividing their forces, might be so much the more weakened; to which end they gave order, winter being already past, that the lord Robert should with his forces advance from Lunigiana, and fall into the territory of Pisa. Robert fell fiercely to work, and many of the Pisan castles he took and sacked, and at length made his incursions as far as the city.

Whilst these things were in agitation, there arrived at Florence ambassadors from the emperor, the king of France, and king of Hungary, all sent from their respective princes to the pope, who persuaded the Florentines to send ambassadors to his holiness, assuring them of their utmost assistance, by a good and sound peace, to put an end to this war. The Florentines refused not to try the ex-

periment, to render themselves blameless, and make it appear to all men they were lovers of peace; so the ambassadors went, but returned without any conclusion. Whereupon the Florentines to honour themselves with the reputation of the king of France's friendship, whilst one part of Italy injured them, and the other forsook them, sent ambassador to that king Donato Acciavolo a man expert in the Greek and Latin tongues, and whose ancestors had always held one of the prime degrees in the city: but being upon his journey he died at Milan. Whereupon his country, to recompense him in them he had left behind him, and to honour his memory, solemnized his funeral in a most magnificent manner, at the public charges, giving pensions and advancement to his sons, and convenient marriage-portions with his daughters. In his stead was sent ambassador to the king signior Guido Antonio Vespucci a man excellently skilful both in the civil and canon law.

The lord Robert's invasion of the territory of Pisa forely afflicted, as all unexpected accidents do, the Florentines; for being so fiercely assaulted on the Siena side, they knew not how to turn themselves for the defence of Pisa; however with good commanders and necessary provisions they supplied that city; and to keep the Lucchese faithful, that they might not furnish the enemy either with men, money or provision, they sent Peter Capponi ambassador thither; who was by that people received

with such jealousy, because of the hatred that city bore the people of Florence, arising from old injuries and continued fears, that he was several times in danger of being slain by the rabble; so that this embassy rather begot new regrets, than contributed to any fresh union. And now the Florentines recalled the marquis of Ferrara, entertained the marquis of Mantua, and with great instance requested from the Venetians earl Charles son of Braccio, and Deiphobus the son of earl Jacob; which in the end after many trials, the Venetians granted; for having made truce with the Turks, and being left without excuse, they were ashamed to violate the faith of the league. So earl Charles and Deiphobus with a considerable force of men, being come and joined with as many as they could securely draw off from the army, which under the marquis of Ferrara opposed the duke of Calabria, they marched towards Pisa, to find out the lord Robert, who with his forces lay near the river of Serchio; and though he made some appearance as though he would have stood the encounter, yet upon better thoughts he retired to Lunigiana, and took up his old quarters, where he lay before his attempt on Pisa.

After his retreat earl Charles recovered all the towns the enemy had taken in that country, and the Florentines, freed from alarms that way, rendezvoused their whole force between Colle and St. Giminiano. But there now being in the army, by Charles his joining it, people that had been trained

up both under Sforza and Braccio, the ancient enmities soon revived, and many believed, had they continued longer together, it would have come to a mutiny; wherefore to chuse the least of two evils, it was judged best to divide them, and send one party under earl Charles to the territory of Perugia, and let the other stay at Poggibonzi, where strongly entrenching themselves, they might prevent the enemy from entering the Florentines country. They likewise had thoughts by this means to force the enemy to divide their army; for they believed that either count Charles might surprize Perugia, where they imagined they had many friends, or the pope be constrained to send a strong party to defend it. They likewise gave order, to reduce the pope into greater necessities, that signior Nicolas Vitelli who had been expelled the city of Castello, where signior Lorenzo his enemy was governor, should with some considerable force approach the town, and make trial if he could drive out his adversary, and rescue the town from the pope's obedience. Fortune, in the beginning, seemed much to favour the Florentine affairs; for earl Charles made great progress in the territory of Perugia, and Nicolas Vitelli, though he failed of getting entrance into Castello, yet he kept the field, and spoiled all the country round about, without any opposition; and besides, the party, encamped at Poggibonzi, made incursions every day to the very walls of Siena; however in the conclusion all these hopes proved vain.

In the first place, earl Charles in the dawn of his victories died, yet had his death bettered the Florentine affairs, had they known how to make use of the victory occasioned by it. For as soon as the pope's army, who were all drawn together at Perugia, had intelligence that the earl was dead, they immediately entertained some hopes, that they might the easier oppress the Florentine forces; whereupon taking the field, they pitched their camp upon the lake within three miles of the enemy. On the other side, James Guicciardine, who was commissary of that army by the counsel of Robert lord of Rimini, who after Charles his death was the most reputed and experienced captain remaining, easily conceiving the occasion of the enemies pride, resolved to stand them, and coming to an engagement near that lake, where Hannibal the Carthaginian gave that memorable defeat to the Romans, the pope's forces were routed. The news of which victory coming to Florence, gave great reputation to the leaders, and universal joy to the people, and certainly had redounded both to their honour and advantage in the whole progress of the war, had not the disorders which happened in the camp at Poggibonzi disturbed the success of it; whereby what was gained by one army, was more than lost by the other. For they having taken a prey from the Sanesi, there happened, in the dividing of it, a difference between the two marquises of Ferrara and Mantua; so that, together by the ears they fell, and the mutiny, though

at last quieted, was so great, that the Florentines, perceiving that they could not employ both of them, consented that the marquis of Ferrara should return home.

That army thus weakened, and without a head, fell into all manner of disorder; whereupon the duke of Calabria, who lay encamped with his army near Siena, took a resolution to beat up their quarters, which was no sooner thought, but done; and the Florentine forces no sooner heard of the enemies approach, but trusting neither to their arms, nor to their multitude, much superior to their enemies, nor to the situation of the place, which art and nature had fortified; without so much as staying to see their enemies, at the first appearance of the dust in the air, shamefully fled, leaving their ammunition, carriages and artillery a prey to the enemy; such reproachful cowardice and disorder was in the armies of those times, that the turning of one horse, either to charge or retreat, gave victory, or defeat. This rout loaded the king's soldiers with plunder and the Florentines with terror; for their city was not only afflicted with the war, but miserably distressed with the plague, which had in a manner infected the whole city; so that the citizens, to shun the contagion, retired to their country towns: and that which made the defeat more dreadful, was, that those citizens whose possessions lay in the vales of Pisa and Delfa, being for fear of the plague gone thither, were, for fear of another death, forced as suddenly with their goods

and children to return to Florence ; and every man stood in fear when the enemies would present themselves at the city gates. Those, to whom the management of the war was committed, seeing these disorders, commanded those who had been victorious in the country of Perugia, that leaving off their prosecution of the war in those parts, they should immediately march into the vale of Delfa, to oppose the enemy, who since the late defeats made their inroads without any controul ; and though they had so straitened the city of Perugia, that every hour they expected its surrender, yet the Florentines chose rather to defend their own towns, than seek to possess themselves of others.

Thus that army, removed from the place of happy success, was brought to St. Casciano, a castle within eight miles of Florence, it being thought impossible they could in any more distant post rally the remains of their broken army. Whilst in the mean time their enemies at Perugia being left free, and without opposers, made great spoil in the country about Arezzo and Cortona ; and the other, who under Alphonso duke of Calabria had overcome at Poggibonzi, first seized on that town, and then on Vico, and sacking Certaldo, after these victories and desolations, went and laid siege to the castle of Colle, which in those times was accounted very strong, and might, if the defenders proved faithful, have kept the enemy at bay, till the Florentines had reinforced their army ; which they having at length completed at St. Casciano, whilst

the enemy made many furious assaults against Colle, they resolved to advance towards that place, to give the inhabitants courage to defend themselves, and by their presence somewhat allay the violence of the enemies. Accordingly they dislodged from St. Casciano, and encamped at St. Giminiano, within five miles of Colle; whence with light horse-men, and the nimblest of their foot, they daily molested the duke's camp. But this relief was not sufficient for those of Colle, who wanting all provisions and necessaries, on the thirteenth of November yielded, to the great displeasure of the Florentines, and joy of their enemies; especially the Sanesi, who, besides their common hate to the city of Florence, bore a private grudge to the inhabitants of Colle.

Winter was now far advanced, and the season improper for war; whereupon the king and pope, either to give some hopes of peace, or to have the liberty to enjoy their victories more quietly, offered the Florentines a truce of three months, and gave them ten days time to return them their answer, which was presently accepted of: but as it happens to all men, that wounds grieve more when the blood grows cold, than when they were first given; so this short repose made the Florentines more sensible of the miseries they had endured; and the citizens freely, and without any respect, accused one another, openly declaiming against the mis-carriages of the war, the unnecessary and vain expences, and the taxes unjustly imposed. Which things were not privately whispered in the corners

of the streets, but publicly declared in the councils, where one had the boldness to turn himself towards Lorenzo de Medici: and tell him, " This city is
 " weary, and will have no longer war, and there-
 " fore you must of necessity consult of some way
 " for peace." Whereupon Lorenzo, as sensible as any other of the necessity, assembled those of his friends, whom he believed most prudent and faithful; and first concluded, seeing the Venetians cold and faithless, and the duke a child, intangled with civil discords, that they must with new friends seek new fortunes. Then they were very doubtful into whose arms, to cast themselves, the pope's or the king's: but upon strict examination of particulars, they approved the king's friendship as most secure and stable; for the short lives of the popes, the variety of succession, the little awe or fear the church stood in of princes, and its irresolutions in performance of any undertakings, are reasons why a secular prince cannot have any intire confidence in a pope, nor securely join fortunes with him. For whoever is the pope's friend in war and danger, shall have his company in victory; but in ruin or distress be left alone; the pope being defended and supported by spiritual power and reputation. They therefore resolved it best to gain the king's friendship, which they conceived could not better, nor with more certainty be done, than by Lorenzo's presence; for the more freedom and confidence they used towards the king, the more easily should they in his mind cancel former regrets.

Whereupon Lorenzo, having settled this resolution in his mind, recommends the city and state to Thomas Soderini then Gonfalonier of justice, and in the beginning of December departs from Florence, and being arrived at Pisa, writes thence to the senate, the occasion of his journey; and their lordships to honour him, and that he might with the more reputation treat a peace with the king, they made him ambassador for the Florentine people, giving him ample authority to enter into such leagues, as he should judge best for the good of the republic.

During these transactions, the lord Robert of San Severino together with Lewis and Ascanius, for their brother Sforza was dead, made a fresh attempt on the state of Milan to regain the government; and having surprized Tortona and Milan, and the whole country being in arms, the duchess was advised to restore the Sforzi, and, to remove all cause of civil dissention, to admit them into the government. The author of this counsel was Antonio Tassino of Ferrara, of a very mean descent; who coming to Milan was first entertained by duke Galeazzo, and afterwards by him appointed chamberlain to his duchess; where, for the beauty of his person, or some other secret virtue, he after the duke's death grew so much in favour with the duchess, that he in a manner governed the state; which extremely incensed signior Cecco a man of great prudence and experience, so that he strove as much as in him lay, both with the duchess and o-

ther ministers of state, to lessen the authority of Tassino: which he perceiving, in revenge of those injuries, and to have friends at hand that might defend him from signior Cecco, he advised the duchess to restore the Sforzi; who followed his counsel without communicating any thing to signior Cecco: whereupon he afterwards told her, you have done an action will deprive you of the government, and me of my life. Which not long after proved true; for signior Cecco was by Lewis put to death, and Tassino soon after driven out of the dutchy;- at which the duchess was so grievously discontented, that departing from Milan, she renounced the government of her young son to his uncle Lewis; and thus Lewis, being left sole governor of Milan, became, as shall afterwards be declared, the occasion of the ruin of Italy.

Lorenzo was proceeding on his voyage to Naples, and the truce still in force, when beyond all expectation, Lewis Fregoso, having intelligence with certain Serezanesi, privately conveyed some armed men into that town, and surprised it, taking all the Florentines prisoners. This accident highly displeased the heads of the Florentine state; who imagined all this done by order of king Ferdinand, and they sent messengers to the duke of Calabria, who lay with the army at Siena in earnest manner complaining of their being thus, during the truce, assaulted. The duke gave them all possible satisfaction both by letters and embassy, that it was done without his father's consent or privity, which

made the Florentines think their condition the worse, seeing their treasury was empty, the head of their state in the king's hands, an old war with the pope and king, and a new one with the Genoese, themselves friendless; for in the Venetians they had little hopes, and were fearful of the governor of Milan, whom they knew various and inconstant.

Lorenzo was by sea arrived at Naples, where he was not only by the king, but by all that city, and with great expectations honourably received; for such a mighty war being raised only to oppress him, the greatness of his enemies made him be accordingly valued. But when he came into the king's presence, and with him began to discourse of the state of Italy, the interests of its several princes and people, and what they might hope from peace, and fear from war; that king having heard him, how sensibly he debated things, more now admired at the greatness of his mind, the readiness of his understanding, the gravity of his judgment, than he had before wondered how he was able to sustain so great a war, insomuch that he redoubled the honourable opinion he had of him, and began to contrive how he might gain him as a friend, rather than continue him an enemy. However upon various pretences and occasions he delayed the time from December to March, to make a double experience not of him only, but the city; for Lorenzo had even enemies in Florence, who would have

been glad if the king had retained him, and served him like Jacob Piccinino; and under colour of fear, least any disaster should betide him, they vented their desires and wishes through the whole city, and in public debate opposed those that favoured Lorenzo. And by these sly ways they had spread abroad a report, that if the king kept him long at Naples, there would be a change of government in Florence, which made the king spin out that time, to see if there would happen any tumult in Florence; but seeing all things quiet, on the sixth of March fourteen hundred and seventy nine he gave him liberty to depart, having first endeavoured to oblige him by all kind of civilities and demonstrations of love; so that there became contracted between them a perpetual friendship, for the mutual preservation of the estates; so that if Lorenzo departed great from Florence, he returned greater thither, being received by the city with all that joy and gladness, which his excellent qualities, and new deservings might justly challenge, having exposed his own life, to purchase his country's peace. Two days after his arrival, were published the articles of peace between the king and commonwealth of Florence, by which they mutually obliged themselves in a league offensive and defensive; and that as for the towns taken from the Florentines in the late war, they should be left to the king's discretion, that the Pazzi should be released out of the castle of Volterra, and that for a certain

time a certain sum of money should be paid to the duke of Calabria.

This peace, as soon as it was published, fretted both the pope and the Venetians; for the pope thought the king shewed him but little respect, and the Venetians thought the like of the Florentines; for both one and the other being concerned in the war, they believed it civil and just, they should at least have been taken notice of in the peace. And no sooner was their indignation reported and believed in Florence, but all men grew jealous that the making of this peace would produce a greater war; whereupon the heads of the states thought to limit the government, and that important affairs should be managed by lesser numbers: to which end they constituted a council of seventy citizens, to whom they gave ample authority to determine matters of the highest concern.

This new council stopt the proceedings of those that sought after novelties, and to gain themselves reputation, they in the first place allowed the peace made by Lorenzo with the king; they designed likewise signior Antonio Ridolphi, and Peter Nasi, ambassadors to the pope.

Notwithstanding however of this peace, Alphonso, duke of Calabria, departed not with his army from Siena, pretending he was staid there by the discords between those citizens; which were so high, that whereas before he was lodged without the city, they now called him in, and made him umpire of

their differences; which opportunity the duke laying hold off, fined many citizens in large sums of money, many he imprisoned, others he banished, and some he put to death: by which proceedings he raised a suspicion, not only in the Sanesi, but in the Florentines likewise, that he designed to make himself prince of that city. Nor knew they which way to remedy it, finding their city but raw in the king's friendship, and at enmity with the pope and Venetians, which suspicion appeared not only in the generality of the people, those subtle interpreters of all things, but in the heads of the Florentine state, and every one affirmed that the city was never in more danger of losing its liberty. But God, who in all extremities ever had a particular care of it, sent an unhop'd for accident, which employed the thoughts both of the king, pope, and Venetians, upon higher concerns than the affairs of Tuscany.

Mahomet the great Turk had with a mighty army invaded Rhodes, and for many months closely besieged that town; and though his forces were great, his obstinacy and fury greater, yet he found the courage of the defendants greatest of all, who with so much valour defended themselves against his numerous assaults, that Mahomet was forced to raise his siege with disgrace. Leaving therefore Rhodes, part of his Armado, under Achomet Bassa, coming towards Velona, whether tempted by the facility of the enterprize, or so commanded by his lord, he on a sudden lands six thousand

men, and storming the city of Otranto, takes and sacks it, putting all the inhabitants to the sword. And then in the best manner he could, fortifying himself in the city, and haven, and sending for a strong party of horse, makes inroads farther, spoiling and wasting all the adjacent country. The king having notice of this invasion, and knowing well how great a prince had undertaken it, dispatches away his envoys to all places to demand assistance against the common enemy, and with great instance recalls the duke of Calabria with his forces from Siena. This assault though it afflicted the duke and all the rest of Italy, yet gave some comfort to Florence and Siena; these thinking they had regained their liberty, and those to have escaped the dangers that made them fear the loss of it; which increased the duke's grief at his departure from Siena, who is said to have blamed fortune, that by so unexpected and untoward an accident had robbed him of the empire of Tuscany. This accident likewise made the pope change his counsels, and whereas before he would hearken to no Florentine ambassador, he was now grown so mild, that he willingly listened to any thing proposed tending to an universal peace. Whereupon the Florentines were advertised, that whenever they were inclined to ask pardon of the pope that they might have it granted; and they not thinking it fit to let slip the occasion, sent twelve ambassadors to his holiness, who, after they arrived at Rome, were

entertained with several debates and delays before they could get audience.

At last all things were concluded between all parties, how they were to govern themselves for the future, and how much in peace and war they were to contribute. Then were the ambassadors admitted to kiss the pope's feet, who attended them, seated in the midst of his cardinals in great pomp and state. They excused themselves for what was past, sometimes laying the blame upon necessity, and the malignity of others, sometimes upon the people's fury, and their just anger, lamenting their condition, as men constrained to fight or die: for that they had undergone the war, the excommunication, and all those inconveniences that attended them, only to preserve their city from slavery, which is a civil death. Notwithstanding, though they had only done what they were forced to, yet if they had committed any fault, they were ready to make amends, throwing themselves upon his mercy and clemency; hoping, after the example of the great Redeemer, he would be ready to receive them into the arms of his compassion. To all which submission the pope in terms full of pride and indignation returned answer; reproaching them with all they had in times past done against the church; however in observance to God's commands, he was content to grant them that pardon they desired; but they were at the same time to understand, they ought likewise to obey; and whenever they forfeited that obedience, that liberty, they had so lately hazarded,

should then be quite taken away, and that justly; for they only deserve to be free that are good, not they who employ themselves in wicked exercises; liberty abused, being destructive to itself and others; and to have a light esteem of God, and a less of his church, was not the part of a free-man, but of a dissolute person, whose inclination was bent rather to mischief than goodness, whom it is not only a prince's duty to correct, but every christian's; wherefore for what was past they must blame them, who by ill actions gave being to the war, and by worse nourished it, and if they were now freed from it, it was more by the goodness of others, than their own desert. Then the articles of peace, and the benediction was read, to which the pope added beyond what had been agreed on and signed, that if the Florentines would enjoy the fruit of that benediction, they must maintain fifteen armed gallies at their proper expence while the Turks made war in the kingdom. The ambassadors made heavy complaints against so great a burden imposed beyond the agreement, but by no foreign interest, or address made by themselves, could they get alleviation of it; but to ratify the peace, the senate sent ambassador signior Guido Antonio Vespucci, sometime before returned from France; who by his prudent management brought things to terms more supportable, and obtained many favours of the pope, as a testimony of his full reconciliation.

The Florentines having thus settled their affairs with the pope, and Siena remaining free, and they relieved of their fear of the king by the withdrawing of the duke of Calabria's army out of Tuscany to pursue the war against the Turks, they pressed the king very hard, to restore those castles of theirs, which the duke of Calabria at his departure had left in the hands of the Sanesi, which the king consented to out of fear, lest otherwise the Florentines should in this necessity desert him, or else by commencing a new war with the Sanesi hinder him from those aids which he hoped to have from the pope and other princes of Italy; and so by a fresh obligation he engaged the Florentines to him, whereby it appears, that necessity, and not articles nor oaths, makes princes honest.

These castles restored, and this new confederacy ratified, Lorenzo de Medici regained all that reputation, which both during the war, and by the peace, whilst it hung doubtful, he had like to have lost; for in those times some men stuck not to scandalize him publicly, by saying that to save himself he had sold his country, and that in the war they had lost their towns, and by the peace should loose their liberty: but those towns restored, an honourable peace confirmed with the king, and the city returned to its former splendor, now throughout all Florence, a city fickle and inconstant, always apt to censure things by their success, and not by their counsel, the story was quite changed; for now Lorenzo was exalted to the skies, and

all the discourse was, how that by his prudence he had regained what the ill fortune of war had made them lose; and that his counsel and judgment was more prevalent than the power and arms of the enemy.

The invasion of the Turks had deferred that war, which the pope and Venetians anger was yet to bring forth; but as the beginning of that assault was unhop'd for, and the cause of much good, so the end was unlook'd for, and the occasion of much mischief; for Mahomet the great Turk, when it was least expected, dying, and discord happening between his children, those Turks in Puglia, seeing themselves abandoned by their lord, upon articles surrendered Otranto to the king. So the fear being removed, which kept the pope and Venetians minds fixed, every man was apprehensive of new irruptions. On one side were in league the pope and Venetians, and joined with them were the Genoese, Sanesi, and other lesser princes: On the other side were the Florentines, king, and duke, to whom adhered the Bolonesi, and many other lords. The Venetians had a great desire to become lords of Ferrara, and they thought they had a reasonable pretence to attempt it, and certain hope to accomplish it: they occasion the took was, because the Marquis affirmed he was no longer obliged to receive the Visdomine * and their salt, for that the contract was, that after seventy years

* That is, the deputies of that republic.

the city should be released of both those burdens; to which the Venetians made answer, that as long as he held the Polesine, so long was he to receive the Visdomine and the salt; to which the marquis refusing to yield, the Venetians thought they had just cause of a war, and a fit season to begin it in, seeing the pope incensed against the king and Florentines; whom to ingratiate themselves the more with, count Girolamo, at his being at Venice, was by them very honourably received, and made a gentleman of their city, which is accounted a great honour where-ever they bestow it. In order to preparing for this war, they had imposed a new subsidy, and chosen the lord Robert of San Severino their general; who, offended with Lewis governor of Milan, had fled to Tortona, and thence, having first raised some tumults, proceeded to Genoa, where now residing he was invited by the Venetians to accept of the command of their armies.

These preparations to new combustions being observed by the adverse league, made them also provide for war, and the duke of Milan chose Frederic earl of Urbin for his general, and the Florentines Constance lord of Pesaro for theirs. And to sound the pope's inclination, and to satisfy themselves whether the Venetians made war upon Ferrara by his consent, king Ferdinand sent Alphonso duke of Calabria to the Tronto, to demand the pope's liberty to pass into Lombardy to aid the marquis; which was by the pope utterly denied.

Whereby the king and the Florentines, understanding his mind, resolved to straiten him with their forces, and constrain him to become their friend; or at least prevent him from giving the Venetians any assistance; for these were already in the field, and had begun the war with the marquis, having first wasted the country, and then laid siege to Figarola, a castle of great importance.

The king and the Florentines having first resolved upon a war with the pope, Alphonso duke of Calabria made incursions towards Rome, and by the assistance of the Colonnese who were joined with him, as the Orfini were with the pope, made great spoil in the country. And on the other side the Florentines, with Nicolas Vitelli, assaulted the city of Castello, driving thence signior Lorenzo, who held it for the pope, and making Nicolas prince of it. The pope, though in these great perplexities, the city of Rome in disorder within, and the country wasted without; yet like a stout man, who would overcome and not yield to his enemies, entertained the magnificent Robert of Rimini for his general; and he being come to Rome, where all the church forces were drawn together, the pope declared to him how much it would redound to his honour, if, by opposing the king's forces, he could deliver the church from the troubles it was involved in, which would be an obligation, not only binding to him, but to all his successors; nay, not only to men, but to God himself. The magnificent Robert of Rimini having first taken a view of

all the pope's forces, and other warlike furniture, advised him to raise as many foot as he could, which with all speed and diligence was put in execution.

The duke of Calabria lay then so near Rome, that every day he made incursions to the very gates of the city, which so incensed the Roman people that they willingly offered themselves to serve under Robert for the delivery of the city, and were all by him received with thanks and praise. The duke hearing of these great preparations, drew a little farther off, thinking the lord of Rimini would not venture too far to find him out, and besides he expected his brother Frederic with new recruits from his father. Robert seeing his forces near equalled the duke's, and that in foot he was much superior, marches upon a sudden out of Rome, and pitches his camp within two miles of the enemy. The duke seeing the enemy on the back of him so contrary to expectation, found there was no other way now but to fight or flee. And that he might not do any thing unworthy the son of a king, resolving to fight, he faces the enemy; and both armies being put into such order, as in those times was usual, advanced to the battle, which lasted from morning to noon. This day there was more valour showed than had been in any encounter for fifty years past in Italy, for on both sides, there was above a thousand men slain, and the issue was glorious for the church; for the multitudes of the pope's foot did so gall the duke's horse, that they were forced to give ground, and the duke himself

had been taken prisoner, had he not been saved by those Turks, who, being left at Otranto, served now under him.

The magnificent Robert, having gained this victory, returned in triumph to Rome; but he enjoyed it but a short time; for having in the heat of the battle drunk too much water, it put him into a flux, of which in few days he died, whose body was by the pope interred with all extraordinary circumstances of honour.

The pope, having obtained this victory, immediately dispatches away the earl towards the city of Castello, to endeavour the restoration of that city to Lorenzo, and partly indeed to try the city of Rimini; for Robert his late general having left behind him only a young infant under the tuition of his mother; the pope thought it an easy matter to snatch his inheritance from him, which he had certainly done, had not the Florentines defended the lady, and in such manner opposed his forces, that he could do no good, neither against Rimini, nor Castello.

Whilst these troubles were at Rome, and in Romania, the Venetians having taken Figorola, with all their forces passed the Po; and the duke of Milan, and the marquis his camp, were both in disorder: for Frederic lord of Urbin falling sick, caused himself to be carried to Bologna, where he died; so that the marquis's affairs every day declined, and the Venetians hourly encreased their

hopes of gaining Ferrara. On the other side, the king and Florentines used all their endeavours to gain the pope to their will; and since they could not do it by force, they threatened him with a general council, which the emperor had declared should be held at Basil. Whereupon by mediation of the emperor's ambassadors, and intercession of the principal cardinals who desired peace, the pope was partly forced, and partly persuaded to consider of peace, and the union of Italy. So that both for fear, and out of consideration, that the greatness of the Venetians was the ruin of the church and of Italy, he consented to agree with the league, and sent his ambassadors to Naples, where a league for five years was concluded between the king, pope, duke of Milan, and Florentines, reserving a place for the Venetians, if they pleased to accept it; which perfected, the pope signified to the Venetians that they should desist from the war with Ferrara. To which the Venetians refused to consent, but with greater forces prepared for the war; and having defeated the duke's and marquis's forces at Argenta, were approached so near Ferrara, that they had pitched their camp in the marquis's park. Whereupon the league thought it not convenient any longer to delay giving more powerful assistance to that lord, and to that end caused the duke of Calabria with his and the pope's forces to march towards Ferrara. The Florentines sent their troops likewise; and the better to dispense orders of war, the league held a council at Cremona, where af-

sembled the pope's legate, the earl Girolamo, the duke of Calabria, the lord Lewis of Milan, and Lorenzo de Medici, with many other Italian princes, where they settled the measures, and devised the order of the future war. And because they were of opinion that Ferrara could not be better relieved, than by making a gallant diversion, they would have the lord Lewis declare war against the Venetians in behalf of the estates of the duke of Milan; but that lord would not give his consent, fearing to bring a war upon his own head, he could not, when he pleased, get rid off. Whereupon they resolved to advance with their whole army to Ferrara, and drawing together four thousand men at arms, and eight thousand foot, they went to seek the Venetians, who had two thousand and two hundred men at arms, and six thousand foot. The league thought it convenient in the first place to assail the fleet, which the Venetians had on the Po, which they did, giving the assault at Bondeno, to the destruction of two hundred vessels, where signior Antonio Justiniano, providitor general, was taken prisoner.

The Venetians seeing all Italy combined to ruin them, to add to their reputation, entertained the duke of the Rhine, with two hundred men at arms into their service; whom, now their fleet was destroyed, they sent with part of their army to keep the enemy at a bay, causing the lord Robert of San Severino to pass the Adda, with the remainder of

the army, and marching up to the walls of Milan, proclaim the duke and the lady Bona his mother: for they thought by this way to work some change in Milan, thinking the lord Lewis and his government were hated by the Milanese. This alarm occasioned at first some disorder, and made the city arm. But in the conclusion, produced an effect quite contrary to the Venetians design; for what the lord Lewis would not before agree to, this affront makes him eager to perform: and therefore leaving the marquis of Ferrara to defend himself with four thousand horse, and two thousand foot; the duke of Calabria with twelve thousand horse, and five thousand foot entered Bergamasco, and thence passed into the country of Brescia, and so to Verona, spoiling, ruining and destroying the whole country adjacent to those three cities, in spite of the Venetians, who could no way help it; for the lord Robert with all his forces could hardly save the cities themselves. On the other side, the marquis of Ferrara had recovered many places, formerly his; for the duke of the Rhine, who was left to attend him, durst not oppose him, having but two thousand horse, and a thousand foot: and thus all that summer of the year fourteen hundred and eighty three, the affairs of the league prospered.

In the following spring, for the winter was past without any action, both armies drew into the field; and the league, that they might the better oppress the Venetians, had drawn all their army together, and might easily, had the war been maintained as

it was the year before, have driven the Venetians quite out of Lombardy; for they were reduced to six thousand horse, and five thousand foot, the duke of Rhine, his year expired, being gone home; and the enemy had thirteen thousand horse, and six thousand foot: but as it often happens, where there are many rivals in authority, their piques and jealousies give victory to the enemy; so Frederic Gonzaga, marquis of Mantua, being dead, who with his authority kept the duke of Calabria, and the lord Lewis united, there happened several differences between them, which created jealousies and suspicions; for John Galeazzo duke of Milan being now at age to govern, and having married the daughter of the duke of Calabria, desired that his father-in-law, rather than Lewis, might manage the affairs of state. And Lewis, sensible of this his desire, resolved to deprive him of the power of executing it. This heart-burning of Lewis's was known to the Venetians, who laid hold on the opportunity, judging they might, as always they had done, gain more by peace, than they had lost by war: and privately treating with the lord Lewis, came to an agreement in August, fourteen hundred and eighty four. Which when the other confederates knew, they were much displeased; especially when they perceived the Venetians were to have all the towns taken from them restored, and still possess Rovigo and Polifene, which they had taken from the marquis of Ferrara; and besides,

enjoy all those pre-eminences they formerly did over that city; for every one was now sensible they had begun a war with vast expence, and in the prosecution of it had gained honour, but in the end shame; since they were to restore the towns taken, and had not recovered those lost. But the allies were constrained to accept it, both because they were weary of the expence, and because they would no farther try their fortune with deceitful and ambitious men.

Whilst affairs were in this posture in Lombardy, the pope by his forces, commanded by signior Lorenzo, besieged the city of Castello, to drive thence Nicolas Vitelli, whom the league, to bring the pope to a compliance, had deserted. Whilst he lay before the town, the garrison which kept it for Nicolas, made a sally, and quite routed the enemy; whereupon the pope recalled earl Girolamo from Lombardy to Rome, to recruit his forces and renew the siege. But upon maturer deliberation, thinking it better to gain Nicolas by peace, than again provoke him by war, he made the best agreement he could for himself, and reconciliation between Nicolas and his adversary Lorenzo, to which fear of new tumults, and not love of peace disposed him; for he saw ill humours growing to a head between the Colonnese and Orfini. The king of Naples had taken from the Orfini in the war between him and the pope, the county of Tagliacazzo, and given it to the Colonnese who adhered to him: afterwards peace being made between the

pope and king, the Orsini by virtue of the articles demanded it. The pope often signified to the Colonnese, that they should restore it, but they would not condescend to a restoration, either at the Orsini's demand, or the pope's threatening, but invaded the Orsini afresh with depredations, and other like injuries; which the pope no longer able to suffer, raised all his forces, and joined them with the Orsini to reduce them, and sacked those houses they had in Rome; killing or taking those that strove to defend them, and seizing most of their towns and castles; so that on one side these tumults ended, not by desire of peace, but by reason of their being too heavily oppressed and afflicted.

Things were not yet quiet in Genoa and Tuscany, for the Florentines kept the earl Antonio de Marciano, with his forces, on the frontiers of Serezana; and whilst the war was in Lombardy, with incursions and other light skirmishes molested the Serezanese; and in Genoa Battistino Fregoso Doge of that city, trusting in Paul Fregoso archbishop, was with his wife and family taken by him, who made himself prince; likewise the Venetians invaded the kingdom by sea, took Gallipoli, and infested the adjacent country: but peace being made in Lombardy, all war ceased, save the tumults in Tuscany and Rome. For five days after the peace was concluded, the pope died, whether his natural term of life were expired, or whether grief for the peace, to which he was a profest enemy, broke his heart. However that pope left Italy in peace,

which all his life time he had kept in war. No sooner was he dead, but all Rome was in arms; the earl Girolamo retired with his men into the castle, and the Orfini were fearful lest the Colonnesi should revenge their late injuries; the Colonnesi demanded restitution of their houses and castles; whereupon in few days succeeded slaughter, robberies and burnings in many places of the city. But the cardinals having persuaded the earl to restore the castle into the hands of the conclave, and to retire into his own estates, and remove his forces from Rome, he, to gratify the pope that should next succeed, obeyed; and surrendering the castle to the conclave, went to Imola; whereby the cardinals delivered from this fear, and the barons from the hopes they had of his assistance in their differences, they proceeded to the election of a new pope, and after much dispute chose John Battista Cibo cardinal of Malfetta, a Genoese, who called himself Innocent the eighth, who by fair and gentle means, for he was a kind and quiet man, made all parties lay down arms, and for a while pacified Rome.

The Florentines, after the peace of Lombardy, could not be quiet, esteeming it a base and shameful thing that a private gentleman should take from them the castle of Serezana; and because by the articles of peace, they were not only to demand things lost, but by force constrain those that impeded or denied their restoration, they presently levied men and money to regain that castle; where-

upon Augustine Fregoso, supposing with his private power he should not be able to defend it, gave that town to St. George. But because St. George of Genoa has often been mentioned, I think it not amiss to shew the orders and rules of that city, being one of the principal of Italy.

When the Genoese had made peace with the Venetians after that important war, which long since happened between them, the city, not able to satisfy those vast sums of money they had borrowed from several citizens, consigned to them the receipts of the customs, that according to their several sums lent, they might divide that revenue amongst them, till they were fully satisfied; and that they might meet together, they assigned them the palace over the custom-house. These creditors settled a rule and order among themselves, making a council of a hundred of them, who were to debate all public matters, and a magistracy of eight, who as heads were to execute; and their credits they divided into parts, which they called Luoghi or shares, and their whole body they entitled St. George.

Their government thus ordered, it happened that the city in general again stood in need; whereupon they had recourse to St. George, which being rich, and their stock well managed, could supply them; and the commonalty, as they had at first granted the custom, began now in pawn of the money to grant their lands; and so far proceeded it by reason of the common necessities, and the supplies of St.

George, that that order had most of the towns and lands, formerly subject to the Genoese, submitted to them; and every year by public vote sent their Rectors, and the commonalty of the city was no way concerned. Whence it comes that those citizens have taken away their love to the rules of the commonalty as a thing usurped, and tyrannized, and placed it on St. George, as a rule well and equally administered; whence arrives the frequent and easy change of government, and that sometimes they obey a citizen, sometimes a stranger; for not St. George, but the commonalty changes government. Wherefore when the Fregosi and Adorni contended for the principality, because they fought for the government in common, the greatest part of the city stood neutral, and left it a prey to the conqueror: all that the office of St. George does, is, when any one has gained the government, to make him swear observation of their laws, which, from the first institution till now, were never altered; for having the arms, money and government in their possession, they cannot without certain danger of a rebellion be altered. An example indeed rare, and which philosophers, with all their imaginations, and chimera's of commonwealths, never found out to hold within the same circle, and among the same number of citizens, liberty and tyranny, civil order and corruption, justice and licentiousness; for that order alone maintains the city in its ancient and venerable customs. And if it happens, as in time certainly it will, that St.

George is possessed of the whole city, that republic will be more memorable than the Venetian.

To this order of St. George, Augustine Fregoso gave the city of Serezana, who willingly received it, and undertaking its defence, presently fitted out a fleet to sea, and sent a garrison to Pietra Sancta, to hinder any passage to the Florentine camp, which already lay near Serezana. The Florentines, on the other side, were desirous to have Pietra Sancta; for whilst that town was out of their possession, the gaining of Serezana would not be so advantageous, Pietra Sancta being placed between that and Pisa; but they could not reasonably lay siege to it, unless first they were by those of Pietra Sancta attacked in the reducing Serezana. And that this might happen, they sent from Pisa to the camp great stores of provision and ammunition with a very weak convoy, that the greatness of the prey, and slenderness of the guard, might make those of Pietra Sancta less fearful to seize it. The plot succeeded to their wish, for those in Pietra Sancta seeing before their eyes so great a prize, took it, and gave the Florentines the occasion they desired to assault them. Wherefore leaving Serezana they besieged Pietra Sancta, which was well manned and bravely defended. The Florentines, having their artillery at first on the plain, raised afterwards a bulwark on the hill, hoping from thence to batter them. James Guicciardine was now commissary of the army, and whilst he besieged Pietra Sancta, the Genoese fleet took and

burnt the fortrefs of Vada, and landing fome of their men, robbed and fpoiled the country ; againft whom with a party of horfe and foot fignior Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi was fent, who in part checked their pride, that they could not fo freely forage. But the Genoefe navy, continuing to moleft the Florentines, went to Leghorn, and with great broad bridges, and other engines, approached the new tower, which for many days they battered with their artillery ; but feeing they could do no good, went away with fhame. In the mean time, they purfued the fieve at Pietra Sancta fo coldly, that the befieged taking heart, ftormed their bulwark, and took it, fo much to their own reputation, and terror of the Florentine army, that they were ready to difband of themfelves ; infomuch that being drawn four miles off from the town, the chief commanders feeing it was already October, thought it beft to draw the army into winter quarters, and defer the fieve till fpring.

When this diforder was heard at Florence, the heads of the ftate were filled with indignation, and prefently, to reftore the camp to its credit and power, chofe for new commiffaries Antonio Pucci and Bernardo del Nero, who with a great fum of money went to the camp, and declared to the captains the anger of the whole fenate, the magiftrates and city, and how much more they would be incenfed, if they returned not to the walls of the town, and what an infamy it would be to them, that fo many captains, and fo great an army, hav-

ing no more but a small garrison to withstand them, could not take so poor and pitiful a town. They set forth likewise the present advantage, and what in the future they might hope from the taking of it. With these persuasions they heartened them to return to the walls, and first of all resolved to storm the bulwark. In the gaining of which, it was observable how much courtesy, affability, kind and obliging words, will work upon soldiers: for Antonio Pucci by encouraging one, promising another, and embracing a third, made them with such fury storm the bulwark, that in a moment they took it; yet was it not got without loss, for count Antonio Marciano was slain with a piece of artillery. However this victory struck such a terror into those of the town, that they began to treat of a surrender; whereupon, that the matter might be concluded with more reputation, Lorenzo de Medici came to the camp, not many days after whose arrival, the castle was gained. It was now winter, and therefore the commanders of the army thought not fit to proceed farther, but retire to quarters till spring, especially since that autumn's unwholesome air had much wasted the army, many of the captains being grievously sick, among whom Antonio Pucci and Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi not only sickened, but died, to the great grief of all men; so much love had Antonio Pucci gained by his carriage at Pietra Sancta.

The Lucchesi, now the Florentines had taken

Pietra Sancta, sent ambassadors to Florence, to demand it as a town formerly belonging to their state; for they alleged by the articles of the late peace, they were obliged to restore to their first lord all those towns that were recovered of another. The Florentines did not deny the article, but answered, that in the treaty of peace between them and the Genoese, they did not know but they must be bound to restore it to them, and therefore, till then, could determine nothing, and if they were to restore it, yet the Lucchese would do well to consider how to satisfy the charge they had been at, and the damage they had sustained by the death of so many of their citizens; and when that was done they might be in some hopes of the town.

All this winter was spent in a treaty of peace between the Florentines and the Genoese, which the pope had set on foot, but nothing being concluded, the Florentines had in the spring besieged Serezana, had not the sickness of Lorenzo de Medici, and the war between the pope and king Ferdinand hindered them: for not only the gout, which he had hereditary from his father, afflicted Lorenzo, but he was tormented with violent pains in the stomach, so that he was forced to go to the waters for a cure. But the most important hinderance was the war, of which this was the original cause.

The city of Aquila was in such a degree subject to the king of Naples, that they in a manner lived free; the earl of Montorio was in great reputation there. The duke of Calabria being with some of

his forces near the Tronto, under pretence of quieting some tumults raised among the country people, and designing to reduce Aquila under the king's absolute obedience, sent for the earl of Montorio, as though he would employ him about what he had then in hand. The earl without any suspicion obeyed and came, and was immediately by the duke made prisoner, and sent to Naples. This was no sooner heard at Aquila, but the whole city was incensed at it, and tumultuously slew Antonio Concinello the king's commissary, and with him several other citizens, known favourers of the king's; and that the Aquilani might have a defender in their rebellion, they set up the standards of the church, and sent ambassadors to the pope, to give him their city and themselves, entreating him as his own to defend them against the king's tyranny. The pope gladly and resolutely undertook their defence, for both upon public and private accounts he hated the king: and lord Robert of San Severino enemy to the state of Milan being out of pay, he chose him his general, and sent for him in all haste to Rome, and besides solicited all count Montorio's friends and relations to rebel against the king, so that the princes of Altemura, Salerno, and Bisguano took arms.

The king, seeing himself assaulted with so sudden a war, sends for aid to the duke and Florentines: the Florentines stood in doubt what to do, for they thought it hard to leave off their own affairs

to follow others; and again to take up arms against the church, they thought dangerous; yet being in a league, they valued their word and faith above interest or danger; and therefore entertained the Orfini in their pay, and besides sent the earl of Pitigliana with all their forces towards Rome to assist the king. Wherefore the king raised two armies, one under the duke of Calabria, which he sent towards Rome, who joining with the Florentine forces were to oppose the church; and with the other under his command, he marched towards his barons. In both places the accidents of war were various, but in the conclusion the king remained victor in all parts. In August fourteen hundred and eighty six, by mediation of the ambassadors of Spain, a peace was concluded; to which the pope, who would no longer encounter his adverse fortune, consented.

By this peace all the potentates of Italy were united, except the Genoese, who were left out as rebels against the state of Milan, and usurpers of the Florentine towns. The lord Robert of San Severino, when this peace was concluded, having been, during the war, a faithless friend to the pope, and to others no formidable enemy, driven away by the pope, marching from Rome, and being pursued by the duke's and Florentine forces, seeing himself, as he was passed Cesena, overtaken, fled, and with fewer than one hundred horse recovered Bologna; and of his other forces part were received by the duke, and the remainder routed and plundered by

the country. The king having concluded the peace, and reconciled himself with the barons, put to death John Coppola, and Antonello of Anversa with his sons, for having, during the war, kept intelligence with the pope.

The pope had learned by this war how punctual and diligent the Florentines were in observing their word, and preserving their friendship; insomuch, that whereas before he hated them, he now began to love them; and to confer greater favours on them, and more kindly treat their ambassadors than usually he had done; which inclination, once known to Lorenzo Medici, was by all possible industry encouraged, for he thought it would be much for his reputation, if to the king's friendship he could add that of the pope's. The pope had one son called Francis, and being desirous to honour him with estates and friends, that he might after his death maintain himself, he could not pitch upon any in Italy, with whom he might more safely make an alliance than Lorenzo de Medici; wherefore he contrived that Lorenzo gave him one of his daughters to wife.

The pope was desirous that the Genoese should peaceably surrender Serezana to the Florentines, telling them they could pretend no right to keep it by Augustin's sale, nor could Augustine give St. George what was none of his own: but however he could do no good of it; for the Genoese, whilst these things were in treaty in Rome, armed many

of their vessels; and whilst at Florence they thought nothing of it, set a shore three thousand foot, and assaulted the castle of Serazenella, seated above Serazana, and in the Florentines possession, and took and plundered and burnt the burrough adjoining; and afterwards planting their artillery against the castle, battered it with great fury. This attempt was strange and unlooked for by the Florentines; whereupon they presently rallied their forces under Virginio Orfini at Pisa, and made their complaints to the pope, that during the treaty of peace, the Genoese had acted their hostilities. Then they sent Peter Corsini to Lucca to keep that city faithful, and Paul Antonio Soderini they sent to Venice, to sound the minds of that republic; they likewise required aid from the king and lord Lewis, but had none from either: for the king excused himself that he stood in fear of the Turks fleet, and Lewis with tricks and cavils delayed them.

Thus the Florentines were for the most part left alone in all their wars, not finding others so ready to assist them, as they were to give aid to their friends. Nor were they now, for it was no new thing, dismayed, because their friends failed them; but raising a great army under James Guicciardine and Peter Vettori, sent them against the enemy, who encamped upon the river Magra. Mean while the Genoese straightly besieged Serazenella, and by undermining, and all other ways, endeavoured to gain it; wherefore the commissaries resolving to relieve it, the enemies refused not the battle; but

in the engagement the Genoese were routed, and Lodovic-of Fresco, and many other commanders, taken prisoners: yet this victory did not so terrify the Serazenesi, that they would yield, but obstinately prepared for their defence, and the commissaries to offend, so that it was bravely assaulted and defended: but the siege continuing long, Lorenzo de Medici resolved to go to the camp, where his arrival so encouraged our soldiers, and disheartened the Serazenesi, that seeing the resolution of the Florentines in assailing them, and the coldness of the Genoese to relieve them, they freely without any conditions surrendered themselves to Lorenzo, and were by the Florentines, except some few heads of the rebellion, kindly received and treated. During this siege the lord Lewis had sent some forces to Pontremoli to make show of assisting us; but having private intelligence in Genoa, he caused an insurrection to be made against the government, and by the help of his party, reduced it under the dutchy of Milan.

In these times there happened war between the Germans and Venetians, and in La Marca, Boccalino of Osimo had made that town rebel against the pope, and usurped the tyranny; but after many accidents he was content by the persuasion of Lorenzo de Medici, to restore that town to the pope; and coming to Florence under Lorenzo's protection lived a long time honourably; but afterwards going to Milan, found not the same faith, for he was by lord Lewis put to death. The Venetians were

by the Germans defeated near the city of Trent, and the lord Robert of San Severino their general slain. After many losses the Venetians with their usual fortune made a peace with the Germans, not as people overcome, but as if they had been conquerors; so honourable was it on their side.

About these times likewise happened two considerable tumults in Romania. Francis d' Orso was a man of great authority in the city of Furli, of whom count Girolamo growing jealous, had often threatened him. Whereupon Francis living in great fear, was advised by his friends and relations to provide for his own safety, and since he was threatened, to kill first, and by the death of the earl free himself from danger. Having consulted hereupon, and firmly resolved it, he made choice of his time on a market-day at Furli; for on that day many other of their friends coming thither out of the country, they thought they might without summons have them to serve their occasions. It was in the month of May, and it being the Italians usual custom to sup by day-light, the conspirators thought it the best time to kill him after supper, at which time, while his family were at supper, he was often in a chamber alone. Having agreed on this, Francis went at the appointed time, and leaving his companions in the outward rooms went to the earl's chamber, and bid one of the attendants tell him he was there to speak with him. Francis was admitted, and after some feigned discourse suddenly slew him, and calling in his companions

killed likewise the groom of his chamber. The governor of the town, coming by chance to speak with the earl, was by the murderers with his few followers in the hall slain. These murders committed, the earl's body was thrown out of the window, and proclamation made, "The Church and liberty," and all the people gathered to arms, for they hated the earl's avarice and cruelty, and sacked his house, and made prisoners the countess Catherine, and her children. There remained only the taking of the castle to perfect their design, which the governor refusing to yield, they dealt with the countess to dispose him to it, which she promised to do, if they would let her go in, leaving her children in hostage. The conspirators believed her, and let her go in; but instead of delivering it, she then threatened them with death, and all manner of torments, in revenge of her husband; and they threatening to kill her children, she told them she had the mold about her to make more in. Whereat the conspirators daunted, seeing the pope owned them not, and having heard the lord Lewis, uncle to the countess, was sending forces to her relief, taking with them all the riches they could carry, they fled to the city of Castello. Whereupon the countess recovering the state, with all imaginable cruelty revenged her husband's death. The Florentines, hearing of the earl's death, took the opportunity to recover the castle of Piancaldoli, which the earl had formerly took from them; and sending now their forces,

with the death of Ciecco, the famous architect, they recovered it.

Besides this, there happened another tumult in Romania of no less importance. Galeotto, lord of Faenza, had married the daughter of John Bentivoglio, prince of Bologna. She, either out of jealousy, or because she was ill used by her husband, hated him to that degree, that she resolved to take from him both his estate and life; and counterfeiting a sickness, she resolved that Galeotto, coming to visit her, should be murdered by some of her confederates hid in the chamber. She had communicated this design to her father, who was in hopes after the death of his son-in-law to become lord of Faenza. The time appointed for this murder being come, Galeotto went into his wife's chamber according to his usual custom, and beginning to talk with her, the murderers came suddenly out of their holes, and before he could make any defence slew him. After his death the tumult was great, the lady with her young son, called Astorre, fled to the castle; the people took arms, and signior John Bentivoglio, with one Bergamino, an officer of the duke of Milan's, having before prepared a party, entered into Faenza, where was likewise Antonio Boscoli, the Florentine commissary. All these principal men being assembled together, discoursing about the government of the town, the inhabitants of the vale of Lamona, who upon the uproar were tumultuously run thither, falling upon signior John and Bergamino, slew the last, and

took the first prisoner; and proclaiming the name of Astorre and the Florentines, recommended the city to their commissary. Intelligence thereof being come to Florence, the accident displeased every one; yet they set at liberty signior John and his daughter, and undertook the care of Astorre and the city by general consent of the people.

Besides these, though the main wars among greater princes were composed, there was every year some tumults in Romania, La Marca and Siena, which being of little importance, I count it superfluous to relate. It is true that in Siena, since the departure of the duke of Calabria from the war in eighty eight, they were very frequent, and after many variations, for sometimes the nobles and sometimes the people governed, the nobility remained superiors; among whom those of greatest authority were Pandolpho and Jacob Petrucci, one of whom by his prudence, and the other by his courage, became as it were princes of that city.

But the Florentines, after the war of Serezana, till the death of Lorenzo de Medici, fourteen hundred and ninety two, lived in the height of all felicity; for Lorenzo seeing all arms in Italy laid by, which by his wisdom and authority had been effected, applied himself to make himself and his city great, marrying Peter his eldest son to Alfonsina daughter of Cavalier Orsini: then John his second son he advanced to the degree of a cardinal; so much the more notable, because beyond all former examples he was not above thirteen years of age,

when he was advanced to that high degree, which was a ladder for his house to ascend by, as afterwards happened. Julian his third son being so very young at his father's death, he could not provide with an extraordinary fortune. Of his daughters, one was married to James Salvati, another to Francis Cibo, a third to Peter Ridolphi; but the fourth whom, to keep his house united, he would have married to John de Medici, died. In other his private affairs, especially as to merchandize, he was unhappy; for the disorders of those he intrusted, who lived not like factors but princes, in many places wasted his estate, so that his country was fain to supply him with great sums of money; wherefore resolving no more to tempt fortune, he forbore to trade, but as the more stable riches, applied himself to purchase lands, and in the Pratese, Pisano, and the vale of Pifa, had large possessions, with palaces more becoming a prince than a private citizen. Then he addressed himself to beautify and enlarge his city, and that he might live more quiet in the state, and fight with his enemies at greater distance, towards Bologna, in the middle of those Alps he fortified the castle of Firenzuola. Towards Siena, he began to repair the imperial hill, and made it almost impregnable; and the way towards Genoa he had blocked up, by taking Pietra Sancta and Serezana. Then with pensions and allowances he maintained himself friends abroad; the Baglioni in Perugia, the Vitelli in the city of Castello, and had himself the particular govern-

ment of Faenza, all which were strong bulwarks to his city. And in these peaceable times he was continually diverting the city with feasts and triumphs, exhibiting jousts and tournaments, and several representations of ancient actions, his chief end in which was to make the city populous, keep the people united, and make the nobility be honoured. He was an extreme lover of any man excellent in any art, of which Agnola of Montepulciano, Christopher Landini, and Demetrius Greco may give ample testimony. Besides, earl John of Mirandula, a man almost divine, leaving all other parts of Europe which he had travelled through, moved by the magnificence of Lorenzo, chose his residence in Florence.

He was exceedingly delighted in architecture, music, and poetry; many poetical compositions being extant, not only of his compofure, but which he had commented upon: and to encourage the youth of Florence to the study of learning, he erected an university at Pisa, and brought thither all the most famous men then in Italy: he built a monastery near to Florence for father Moriano of Chinazano of the order of St. Austin, because he was a most excellent preacher. He was highly beloved both by God and fortune, which made all his undertakings successful, and his enemies unhappy; for besides the Pazzi, Battista Frescobaldo in Carmine, and Baldinotto of Pistoia in his villa or country house, attempted to murder him; but

all of them with their accomplices suffered deserved punishment. This magnificence, this prudence and fortune, was with wonder known, esteemed and valued not only by all Italy, but by far distant princes. Matthew king of Hungary gave many testimonies of the love he bore him; the Soldan sent him his ambassadors and presents; the Great Turk delivered up to him Bernardo Bandini the murderer of his brother; all which made him the admiration of all Italy, and his reputation every day with his prudence increased; for he was eloquent and witty in discourse, discreet in resolution, and quick and courageous in execution. Nor was he blemished with any vice to taint so many virtues; save that he was somewhat addicted to venery, loved witty and sharp jesting, and delighted in childish sports, more than became a man of his gravity; for he would often play with his children, and make himself one amongst them; so that to consider this toying and gravity, there seemed to be in him two several persons conjoined by impossible ligaments. His latter days were full of trouble, occasioned by the distempers wherewith he was grievously afflicted, for he was troubled with most intolerable pains in his stomach, which so tormented him, that in April fourteen hundred and ninety two, he died in the forty fourth year of his age. Nor ever died any man not only in Florence, but in all Italy, with such reputation for prudence, nor so much lamented by his country: and since by his death, great ruins were to ensue, so heaven was pleased to give

evident signs of it. Amongst the rest, the highest spire of the church of Sancta Reparata was struck with lightening, and the greatest part of it tumbled down, to the great wonder of all men. In short, all his citizens grieved for him, and all the princes of Italy, of whom not one but sent his ambassador to Florence to condole his death. But what succeeded, showed they had indeed sufficient cause to grieve; for being destitute of his counsel, those which remained could neither find a way to satisfy nor restrain the ambition of Lewis Sforza governor of the duke of Milan. Wherefore not long after Lorenzo's death, began to spring up those wicked seeds, which, none knowing how to root out, did ruin, and yet do ruin all Italy.

T H E E N D.



